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ABSTRACT

This set of four newsletters discusses current issues in gifted education. The first issue includes: "The Underserved Young Gifted Child: Status of Programs and Research" (Joan Smutny); "The Home Education Model: An Alternative Program for the Gifted" (Karen Kendig) and "Jonathan Swift (1667-1745): A Need for Gifted Readers" (Michael E. Walters). The second issue includes: "Anti-Intellectualism in Secondary Schools: The Problem Continues" (Stephen Schroeder-Davis); "Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Children: The SENG Program Offers Many Opportunities for Gifted Children" (James T. Webb and Jim Delisle); "Two Gifts and Three Responsibilities" (Diane D. Grybek); and "E. M. Forster (1879-1970) and the Study of Values" (Michael E. Walters); "Making a Difference One-to-One: UCONN Mentor Connection" (Jeanne H. Purcell and Joseph S. Renzulli); "NAGC Position Paper: Affective Needs of Gifted Children"; "An Educator's Creed" (Ross Butchart); "Ability Grouping: Aid or Discrimination" (Karen Cogan); and "Richard Rodriguez: The Struggles of a Gifted Minority Student" (Michael E. Walters). The last issue of the series includes the following articles: "Design Education Activity: A Curriculum Model for Gifted and Talented" (Pauline Bottrill); "Using Newspapers as Textbooks of Life and Culture" (Ross Butchart); and "Appreciation for a Gifted American Writer: Ellen Glasgow (1874-1945)" (Michael E. Walters). (Some articles contain references.) (CR)

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Recently I attended the annual conference of the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) in Worthington, Ohio. This impressive meeting included approximately 450 teachers, program coordinators and parents. A variety of interesting sessions and speeches/presentations were offered by such individuals as Jim Curry, Jim Delisle and Carol Tomlinson. The synergy and dynamism produced by these speakers and OAGC members was both inspirational and noteworthy for stressing the importance of gifted education in Ohio. The organizers of this meeting, Sharon Buzzard and Maria Pappas, produced a thoroughly enjoyable and productive conference.

My confidence in the gifted field was strengthened by the panel discussion I moderated. (The participants were Jim Curry, Jim Delisle, Bruce Kline, Jerry Landman, Stephen Schroeder-Davis and Carol Tomlinson.) The topics addressed ranged from the need for educators of the gifted to work more closely with regular classroom teachers to the importance of motivating parents (both gifted and non-gifted) to support differential education programs. The panelists' viewpoints on these and other issues covered a wide variety of viewpoints. But the tone of the discussion showed that individuals with different opinions and approaches concerning gifted education can engage in dynamic and useful interchanges that help teachers and administrators to better understand some of the key issues in this field. The range of opinions expressed by the panelists was valuable to both the participants and the audience. It would be educationally healthy to have similar types of panel discussions at every state and national meeting. Such discussions among educators with different viewpoints are particularly necessary at national meetings to promote the survival and expansion of gifted education during these hard times.

The current national leadership seems to be taking a role of accommodating gifted education to the regular education classroom. As indicated by many teachers at OAGC, this role of appeasement is not working and will eventually bring about the overall demise of differential education for the gifted. In this regard, we need to strengthen our offense to a much higher level than is currently evident at the national level. Why is this accommodating stance being so forthrightly taken by many national leaders in the gifted field? Is this position best for gifted children and for the future of our nation? Would a new organization of educators of the gifted be better able to stem the tide of anti-giftedness that currently exists nationwide?

One of my authors, Stephen Schroeder-Davis , presented sessions at OAGC concerned with his analysis of anti-intellectualism in American schools and society. These sessions were very well attended by teachers concerned with the pressures exerted against gifted children by their non-gifted peers and regular education teachers. It is clear that anti-intellectualism is strong in the public schools and has detrimental effects on the social and intellectual development of gifted children. Teachers can help them to deal with this problem by using such instructional guides as Coercive Egalitarianism: A Study of Discrimination Against Gifted Students (Gifted Education Press, 1993) by Stephen Schroeder-Davis. Furthermore, the anti-intellectualism that exists in public education needs to be honestly addressed by school boards, superintendents, teachers and parents.

The authors in this issue are seriously concerned with future of gifted education from the early education through university levels. Joan Smutny, Director of The Center for Gifted at National-Louis University, discusses some of the articles included in her forthcoming book on educating young gifted children. Through her dedicated efforts, she has established one of the largest summer programs for gifted students in the nation. During the summer months, it includes over 2,000 students from all over the Chicago metropolitan area. Karen Kendig appears in this quarterly for the first time with an essay on homeschooling the gifted. She has taught in a gifted magnet school in Colorado for six years and is coordinator of the testing and selection program today. She has written articles and spoken at state and national conventions on a variety of topics, including underachieving gifted. Karen is currently serving on her local school district's gifted and talented committee and is a homeschooling parent. Michael Walters concludes this issue with a discussion of Jonathan Swift's satirical writings -- much of what Swift satirized has particular bearing on the current state of public education. Walters has been writing articles for *GEPQ* on the humanities and related areas since its inception nine years ago.

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THE UNDERSERVED YOUNG GIFTED CHILD: STATUS OF PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH

BY JOAN SMUTNY THE CENTER FOR GIFTED
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The gifted young child has been and continues to be underserved and ineffectively served; and within this general classification of young children, there are a number of special populations of gifted whose needs have been virtually ignored. One sign that gifted preprimary and primary education is coming of age is increased sensitivity to the requirements of these special groups, which include children from impoverished backgrounds. Commonly, special populations have been underidentified due to traditional identification methods that rely heavily on IQ and achievement tests. These standardized tests are severely limited in their ability to identify any group outside of mainstream culture.

Margie Kitano and Rosa Perez encountered obstacles in designing and implementing their programs, called Project Excel and Project First, for gifted children from low income and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in San Diego. According to Kitano and Perez, few programs are available for these young children because of major misconceptions about their needs, such as: remedial education is required to prepare them for schooling; children need to master the English language before facing larger challenges; standardized testing of them is less reliable; and enriched curriculum at the preschool/primary level is developmentally unsound. As Kitano and Perez discovered, "research on successful strategies for improving educational opportunities for this population consistently identifies early intervention and parental involvement as critical components."

To this end, Kitano and Perez designed Project Excel, which relies on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences as a means by which to identify gifted bilingual children and enrich the bilingual classroom, and Project First Step, a Javits funded project for culturally diverse pre-school children that integrates regular education and preschool education with gifted and bilingual education. In Project Excel and Project First Step, all children enrolled in bilingual or preschool programs receive an enriched curriculum based on Hilda Taba's inductive thinking strategies and Parnes' creative problem-solving model. These strategies are then integrated into interdisciplinary thematic units. The emphases in the classroom on creative, inductive and higher-level thinking skills gives students opportunities to demonstrate their strengths. Using observation and portfolios, the teacher is able to informally identify a pool of potentially gifted children in his classroom. Teacher identification is supported by parental input and student motivation. In this way, students are not only identified, but readied for entrance into the school's formal gifted program which starts in third grade.

Critical to successful implementation of these programs has been extensive collaboration and communication among gifted teachers, bilingual teachers, preschool teachers and regular classroom teachers. For example, one Project Excel teacher "presented to First Step teachers a demonstration of a lesson combining brainstorming and Taba's developing concepts strategy for use with Spanish-speaking children who are not yet reading. The demonstration provided an excellent example of capturing children's ideas and helping them categorize by recording their brainstorming on audio tape, drawing or cutting out pictures to represent their ideas, and manipulating the drawings to create and re-create categories." Peer coaching is a critical component in honing teaching skills as instructors seek to implement new elements into their curriculums. "... the coaches record the positive aspects of the lesson, the children's responses to the lesson and the behaviors targeted by the teacher during the planning phase. Following the observation, the teacher describes her or his feelings about the lesson and outcomes. The coaches share their positive observations and the team of teachers and coaches problem solve about possible modifications and extensions."

Parent involvement is a must. Project staff hold three-to-five parent workshops per year to encourage parent involvement and awareness of the curriculum being taught. In its fifth year of operation, the results have been enormously positive. Evaluation methods show that "the longer the students remain in Project classrooms, the more likely they are to outperform their own Project peers on the standardized achievement test. Moreover, students identified for the talent pool outperform those not so identified in Project and non-Project classrooms. Further, teacher surveys reveal that teachers of the gifted rate former Excel students similarly to non-Excel gifted students." Considering the low incomes and linguistically diverse backgrounds of these children and their families, that is a remarkable achievement indeed!

The identification problems associated with low income, culturally diverse children are applicable as well to children who hail from rural areas. Poverty and rurality limit their access to cultural opportunities and exposure to the world beyond their own community. Lack of varied career models lowers career expectations and enforces the status quo. Not only do these children need special means of identification, but special programming for these children

and their parents is also required. According to Howard Spicker and W. Thomas Southern, experts in the field of the rural education, "Every effort must be made to develop the ability of teachers to recognize talent in expression, content that is different from that which they have learned to expect. Programming must take into account the lack of human and material resources and isolation inherent in the most impoverished and rural areas."

Project Spring strove to identify gifted rural children through anecdotal information given by parents. Parents were asked questions about their children's abilities or interests in fixing, making, and collecting things, and in writing and reading. "Unfortunately, parents of rural or economically disadvantaged children are less likely to provide the same level of information that a middle class parent might. They have less time to fill out lengthy information forms, their writing skills may be such that they are unable or unwilling to provide extended and elaborate information . . . they may be suspicious toward schools and view with distrust requests for information." (Southern & Spicker, 1996)

Southern and Spicker know that even after a child has been identified for a gifted program, there is no guarantee the child will remain in the program. In fact, drop-out rates seem to directly correlate with socioeconomic status. Southern and Spicker advise that, "For rural children it is important to use instructional opportunities that are closely related to the environment and experiences of the students being taught. In this way instruction can focus on the experiences to which rural students have been exposed and use the actual resources the community possesses to make the process relevant . . .. The programs that were most successful included those where a home intervention component was part of the educational efforts. It is essential to convince family members that education is the means for their children to achieve a better life. In rural areas, particularly, it is necessary to emphasize that the development of talent can also preserve the best of what is in the local community."

Fortunately, with the advent of the computer it is not as necessary to be able to travel physically in order to enrich oneself. With CD-ROM, a student can travel to the Louvre, the San Diego Zoo or the Uffizi galleries. Through the internet and computer bulletin boards it is no longer necessary to have a sophisticated urban library. Southern and Spicker predict that computer technology can be the great equalizer and means of access for children from isolated areas; or the greatest of divisors if rural children are withheld from technology as well.

Another population within the gifted whose needs are special is young children who are gifted and learning-disabled. The dilemmas created by the disparity between potential and performance, the above-average abilities displayed at home compared to the failure in meeting school standards, and the child's frustration at his own inability to turn his marvelous vision into an equally impressive product, creates a situation too sensitive to be ignored by schools. Too often, schools discount the gifted side of the young child and focus almost entirely on remediating the deficit. This approach can seriously frustrate the otherwise gifted child and cause severe emotional distress.

Nancy Wingenbach suggests that if children are viewed "in terms of strengths and weaknesses as opposed to over-all classification," the educational approach will naturally fall into place to meet the individual needs of that child. If "the educational goal is to teach the child to process information in such a manner enabling him to cope well and interact successfully with the world in which he lives . . . no matter the mode of information input/output, the important concern is the internalization of knowledge in combination with the conceptualization, application or use of that knowledge within the context of the child's daily life." Wingenbach advises "altering the mode of processing information to fit with the strengths of the child. The gifted-learning-disabled child may have been altering the processing for years and researchers are just catching on to what the student already knows." Wingenbach warns, "Too often, the child's identified weakness becomes the hub around which all lesson plans and teaching strategies revolve. The child's particular strengths are not reinforced and the compensatory practice of using alternate modes of processing information is not encouraged." This misguided approach causes undue stress for the young child, resulting in emotional and behavioral problems that could have been avoided.

IEP's, or even Renzulli's revolving door approach to gifted, may be one of the most appropriate ways to empower the young child who is gifted and learning-disabled, to focus on his gifts. Teachers need to take more time to break down assignments or projects into discrete steps with deadlines along the way. Also, teachers should provide alternative approaches and choices for these students to demonstrate their knowledge. Just recognition and awareness of the gifted side of such a child will do much to assist that child in maintaining his own sense of wholeness and positive self-esteem.

What of the highly gifted young child? What would be your reaction if your six-month-old began speaking in three- or four-word sentences, or your newborn, on his first day home from the hospital, visually analyzed for two hours every detail of your kitchen? Would you admit to yourself that possibly your infant was a highly gifted individual, or would you prefer to wait until the child was in third grade and took standardized tests? There is no doubt that the highly gifted are "different." Stephanie Tolan has much to say about the difficulty in identifying and

coping with the highly gifted due to asynchronous development. "The concept of `mental age' is useful in grasping cognitive differences in children at the highest ranges. We understand that a six-year-old with an IQ of 200 (mental age of 12) is likely to be desperately out of place in a first grade classroom. But mental age is too narrow a concept to help us cope with asynchronous development. There are many ages within any gifted child, and the interaction of those ages is complicated. Parents usually have at least some sense of the age variation. One mother explains that her eight-year-old son Tad is `eight on the soccer field, fourteen in algebra class, twenty when pleading his case for more challenging school work, and three when he can't find his teddy bear at bedtime.'"

Due to inflexible curriculums and programming, schools often provide little sensitivity to problems of asynchronism. "Consider the plight of Nicole, a six year old girl with an IQ score over 150, who reads and comprehends at the eighth-grade level but is put into the first grade with her age mates. In her school the recent emphasis on `inclusion' has dictated that all first graders use the same reading text. It is impossible for Nicole to exhibit an eighth grade reading level on the primer she is given; she can't read the words `I see the dog' eight levels better than any of the others. . . . Her handwriting, far too slow to keep up with her agile mind, is ponderous and messy; for this reason she often writes short, simple sentences rather than the complex one she is thinking. Even in open-ended writing assignments she is unable to show her level of verbal reasoning." (Tolan, 1996)

Under circumstances as frustrating as Nicole's, Tolan advocates acceleration, home schooling or even "un-schooling." One mother avers that she "wants nothing in her children's lives that smacks of school, which she associates with being forced to do things of little or no interest for little or no reason. `Shelley learned incredibly well when she was 18 months old and I wasn't trying to teach her anything. Why should I start teaching her now? Her brother likes different subjects and does different things. But he learns quite well on his own, too.' These two children make out their own schedules and devise their own learning plans. . . . When they take standardized achievement tests, their scores surprise even their mother– they are well beyond their age mates even in subjects they have made no apparent effort to study. And in subjects of current interest they are routinely off the scales. `No matter how haphazard our system might appear, I don't think it can be educationally any worse than school.'" Tolan warns that failure to nourish the intellectual capacities of the gifted young child and ignoring the dilemmas of asynchronism can have a life-long crippling effect.

Corliss McCallister and William Nash have focused their attention on the young child who is highly creatively gifted. "Grace was a child who appeared at preschool every morning with a bag full of costumes and dancing shoes. She was a joyful and tireless performer. During the course of the morning session she would change into different outfits, assemble a group of willing audience members and perform improvisational works. But when observed in the first month of kindergarten, she had changed. Her eyes were glazed over in a look more appropriate for a bored third-grader, her shoulders slumped and her head hung over. Her mother reported that Grace had asked to drop out of kindergarten after the first week and became depressed when she was told she had twelve years of school ahead of her. While her classmates were excused for gifted and talented class, Grace remained to do work sheets because her IQ and achievement scores were not acceptably high." In speaking with her mother, she summed her kindergarten experience up as follows, "I don't think this kindergarten thing is going to work out. I don't have time for the really important things in my life. I've been there a whole week and we haven't danced once."

McCallister and Nash purport that creativity in the young child is often discounted in the classroom because there is little agreement on how creativity should be defined, much less promoted and nurtured, in the classroom. In a Javits funded proposal, McCallister and Nash set out to first define creativity. After an exhaustive review of the research on creativity, they decided they must develop their own theory of creativity with the following assumptions:

1. Creativity is continuous, not dichotomous.

All people are creative; however some people excel at it. If children are to develop their creative sides, they must be valued for it.

2. Creativity is a dynamic, interactive and multidimensional process.

". . . creativity is dynamic because it changes . . . What is creative in 1994 may be completely standardized by 1996. Creativity is also dynamic because it links the past, present and future . . . the creative process is interactive because it is the interplay of the genetic uniqueness of the individual with the unique life experiences of that individual. The mix of all the internal factors with all the external conditions of living create the combination which will result in a novel product or performance."

3. Creativity may encompass intentionality, but requires awareness.

"Given that creative behavior is conscious, then, the statement can be made that the mental processes involved in creative thinking can be learned, practiced and changed by each individual. Thus while children may intuitively or naturally choose creative behaviors, these can also be

motivated and modified by the educational process."

4. Creativity is higher order intellectual processing.

Creativity is not mystical. "Like intelligence, creativity entails both convergent and divergent thinking processes. Like other intellectual processes, it requires the interactions of ideas and intentions and the recognition of both concrete and abstract inter-relationships."

Their research led McCallister and Nash to define creativity as "a continuous, pervasive, interactive and multidimensional process that gives rise to invention, transformation, generation, novelty and originality. Creativity is an integral part of all human intellectual performance; a higher order of intellectual processing, influenced by biological, psychological, sociological, conceptual knowledge, and general problem-solving knowledge internal to the creator." From these theoretical assumptions McCallister and Nash developed the objectives for identification instruments, curriculum design, teacher training and student activities.

In identifying the young child who is creatively gifted, McCallister and Nash relied on two instruments in particular. First was the Torrance List of Creative Positives (TCP), which is based on Paul Torrance's Non-Test Indicators Checklist (1973). The TCP includes 70 items that describe creative behaviors in which observers rate the strength of the child's behavior. The 70 items are split into 15 categories such as responsiveness, expressiveness and enjoyment of arts activities. McCallister and Nash also developed the Contrasting Behaviors Checklist (CBC), which is "a list of 33 paired adjectives, one representing a trait of creative children and the other, its opposite." It is simple to use and can be applied to a wide variety of child activities. In general it is recommended that multiple instruments be used, assessment include information from a variety of sources and that information be both qualitative and quantitative.

McCallister and Nash implemented their creativity theory in a program for pre-school children. Although no one can guarantee that children will produce highly creative products, the teaching staff felt responsible for creating a classroom environment most conducive to creativity. "Every instructional design decision--the room layout, questions asked, the schedule, the materials chosen--were expected to contribute to increasing creative behaviors. . . . The two words that emerged from the experience of the first preschool were `opportunity' and `affirmation.' Students were to be given opportunities which they had previously been denied--opportunities to explore, to experience, to express. Affirmation, the behavior which rewarded individuals for creative effort, was considered equally important. The adults and the students were expected to affirm everyone's right to be creative, to affirm their own efforts at creative behavior and to affirm their creative products."

Several conclusions can be drawn from this project. The theory can be used as a basis for a taxonomy on creativity; or it can be used to guide curriculum writing to include creative aspects. Programs "which emphasize the creative process over, or to the exclusion of, the creative product (or vice-versa) will not be as effective as programs which take a balanced approach." (McClellan and Nash).

Patricia Brooks also addresses the concern that minority children are grossly underrepresented in gifted programs, through her innovative identification method called Project Step. In 1987, Project Step was implemented in Maryland by Brooks, as a means of identifying gifted minority students. The program focused on teachers, rather than tests, as the prime identifiers. Teachers over the course of a school year were asked to identify those children who demonstrate special abilities in five areas: learning, motivation, leadership, creativity, and adaptability. At the heart of the program was a checklist made up of 40 behavioral characteristics observable in the classroom. Project Step, which was supported through extensive teacher training, has proven to be highly successful as an identification means in placing minority students in the district's TAG program or magnet school.

Yet, after a few years of implementation Brooks discovered a disturbing pattern. "Despite the school's relatively high overall academic standing in the county (23rd out of 122), minority students were lagging far behind their white classmates in both the TAG and COMP [comprehensive] programs." Staff and administration were galvanized into action. Faculty were reorganized into teams wherein all staff members received both comprehensive and TAG teaching duties. Teachers were empowered to "research, practice, design, and implement innovative programs" that increased achievement for all students but especially emphasized support for underachieving minority students.

All students benefitted from this innovative approach. Using Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, new classes were created that went beyond the usual emphases on linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences almost exclusively stressed in most gifted programs. Classes in art, music and drama were added to the curriculum. Teaching methods that emphasized a hands-on approach were included in order to better complement a greater range of learning styles. Opportunities for mentoring and tutoring between the older and younger children were arranged and notably 100% of the students were guided into at least one extracurricular school activity, sport, club, etc., that mirrored Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

The task was Herculean; the results, outstanding.

Standardized test scores shot up for both minority and non-minority students; enrollment in pre-algebra class increased; teachers and administrators received numerous awards both locally and nationally for their achievements; but most importantly, the gap between white and non-white achievement was closed.

These responses to the challenge of dealing with the underserved young gifted child can hearten us. We seek to identify the diversity of gifts expressed by these children and to design and implement programs and activities that will have an impact on their talents. No single answer meets their multifaceted needs. All programs and priorities shared in this article compel the reader to begin early in identification and intervention. Teachers, parents and care givers owe it to these bright young children to recognize their needs and their potential as life-long learners, starting in toddlerhood.

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This material is drawn from an anthology on the young gifted child, to be published this winter-to-spring 1996 by Hampton Press, Creskill, New Jersey. ▬▬▬▬▬

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THE HOME EDUCATION MODEL: AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED

BY KAREN KENDIG KIOWA, COLORADO

Each year I coordinate the testing and selection process for a gifted program in one of the largest school districts in Colorado. Much of my time is spent taking calls from parents. Parents who call are concerned about their child's education and emotional well being. Many of them relate horror stories of their child's treatment and lack of progress in the regular classroom. Some are concerned about the lack of challenge. Others worry about their child's behavior and misconduct. Still, others are heartbroken by their child's lack of self esteem caused by being ostracized from their classmates.

Parents and their gifted children often experience dissatisfaction with classroom situations and are very vocal about expressing their concerns. Unfortunately, many of those parental concerns may be perceived by educators as outspoken and overbearing. When parents and teachers become embattled against one another, it is often the gifted child who loses. The fact is, both parents and educators want what is best for the child and in many cases, home education is the best alternative. Consider the following scenarios.

Lilly has a passion for writing. She wants to write every chance she gets and does. When the teacher is giving directions in math, Lilly is writing. When a speaker comes to talk about Japan, Lilly is taking notes for a story she will write later. Lilly puts an inordinate amount of time into her creative writing projects; typing them on the computer, including pictures and an author profile. Her grades in other subjects are very unpredictable. This unpredictability is due in part to not listening when directions are given and to her pure lack of interest in other subjects. When Lilly is absorbed in her writing and it is time to stop and get ready for recess or music class, she often throws a fit because her train of thought has been interrupted. Lilly is a gifted young lady who is not achieving in school unless it relates to language arts and literature. She is very unhappy and wishes there was another way to learn.

Don is about as creative as they come. At home he has constructed several of his own inventions. He draws intricate and detailed pictures of every type of machinery. When asked to tell a joke, it takes him no time at all to come up with a very clever pun or riddle of his own. Kids in the neighborhood love to play at his house because he always makes up the neatest games and hide outs. At school, Don has a very difficult time taking subjective tests full of multiple choice and true/false questions. Due to his imagination and creative way of looking at things, Don is always able to justify any answer on the test. If Don were able to take essay tests or give his answers verbally, he would do much better in most subjects. With thirty other students in his class, it is rare that the teacher has the time to give such time-consuming tests. Don thinks he is smarter than the tests reveal and he wishes there was some way to prove it to himself and others.

Sally is very verbal. She enjoys talking and has a vocabulary that is quite advanced for her age. When there is a play, Sally gets the biggest part. She will learn it quicker, say it louder and be more dramatic than anyone else in the class. When the teacher asks a question, Sally's hand will be the first to go up. The teacher will wait for the others and then say, "Doesn't anyone but Sally know the

answer?" Sally likes to read and does well in just about all of her subjects. The teacher picks her to tutor other students who are having a hard time. Sally is the teacher's pet, but she hates to go to school. She does not have a friend in the world. (If Sally does not get some kind of help before she gets into junior high school, she will more than likely go underground and play stupid to gain friends and become popular with the boys.)

Sheila has a wealth of ideas and information stored in her head waiting to be unleashed. She never answers a question, although she has the answer. She rarely finishes a test, though she memorized the book backwards and forwards. Her projects are good, but never exciting or out of the ordinary. Sheila is a gifted student performing at an average level because she is a perfectionist. She is afraid to get the answer wrong so she never raises her hand and worries over her answers so long that time runs out before tests are completed. Sheila is so afraid to risk failure that the creative and daring ideas in her head remain there. Her projects are safe and replicate other acceptable projects from the past. Sheila is dissatisfied with her performance and is unhappy with herself. She wishes things were different.

Tad is a computer whiz. He works with them so much that he knows a lot about everything you can learn from software today. Tad uses computer lingo and talks to the technical advisor when he comes to service the computer. His teacher arranged for him to attend and help teach an inservice course on computers for the school staff. The other students think Tad is weird. A geek, they call him. Tad wishes there was someone who shared his interest and knowledge about computers. He knows there are others out there beyond the classroom walls, but he is depressed to think he has to graduate before he finds them.

There are thousands of children, possibly millions, who are unhappy with school. Let's say that some of them are gifted and lucky enough to be in school districts where gifted programs are provided for those who qualify. (Keep in mind that there are many students who are gifted, but for one reason or another do not qualify for a particular alternative program.) If a student is in a gifted program, why would a parent be unhappy with his/her child's education?

When Nancy's daughter, Sarah, was put in the gifted pull out program she felt it was better than nothing. Now she's not so sure. Sarah misses a different subject each week to attend her gifted class for one hour. During that time, her group does some mind games and mini study projects. Sometimes they discuss current affairs. While she is out of the classroom, her classmates are often learning a new lesson or working on class assignments. Sarah either misses directions completely or has to stay after school to have the teacher repeat them. Sarah often has homework to make up for what she missed in class. She does not see any benefits of being smart. It's just extra work. Nancy wants her daughter to be stimulated and challenged all the time at school, not just one hour a week, but what alternative does she have?

Steve's son is in a school for the gifted. He is challenged all day long. Subjects are taught at a fast pace and what is not done in class, he brings home for hours of homework. Steve's son is bright and catches on quickly in most subjects, but not all. Those subjects he is slower at, he finds extremely frustrating. Due to the pace of the class, he never truly masters a skill before speeding on to the next one. Steve's son has a very distorted view of his abilities, because he is not gifted in all areas and therefore is not the brightest student in the class. Steve is concerned about his son's self concept and the amount of work he is doing at such a young age. Steve feels that his son is not allowed to be a child and is concerned about his level of frustration and anxiety.

Charles and Darla have four children and have seen two of them through the public school system and the gifted programs it had to offer. They are proud of their children's accomplishments and feel their older children received a good education. They have watched over the years, however, as children with learning problems have been mainstreamed into the regular classroom with no adjustments made in class size. They have seen a decline in respect for teachers and a decline in the rights of teachers to enforce rules and regulations. Being in business management, Charles recognizes a decline in productivity among students and a decline in morale among teachers. Darla volunteers in the classroom more than ever before and is dismayed to find the teachers totally overwhelmed by their situation. Charles and Darla know they must vote for educational reforms and increased tax dollars to support smaller teacher/pupil ratios. They also know that by the time reforms arrive their last two children will have already graduated from understaffed schools. They need help for their children now.

Help for our family came four years ago when I began homeschooling our two oldest children. At that time I had no idea homeschooling would become such a growing trend. In 1994 the Colorado Home Educators Association reported the following statistics from the Colorado Department of Education. In the fall of 1994 public school registrations increased by 11%. There was a 28% increase in private/parochial school registrations and a 214% increase in home school registrations. In a telephone conversation with a representative from the Home School Legal Defense Fund, I was told that the latest statistics from the Department of Education in 1990 reported 474,000 homeschoolers nationally. The organization estimates a 20% growth per year, nationally, which leads to a conservative estimate that one million children in the

United States are educated at home today.

How can we as educators possibly agree that learning at home could be better than what we can offer in the public schools? It is a simple mathematical paradox: less is more! Every teacher in the world knows that students learn more when there are fewer of them together in a classroom. Less gets more attention, more time, more praise, and more positive results.

Classroom teachers and parents often believe that an educator must know everything to be a good teacher of the gifted. They must be experts in all subjects or at least possess a teaching certificate to qualify for such a task. Educators trained in the field of gifted education are the first to admit that teachers need not know *everything* to teach gifted students. Teachers of the gifted are experts at facilitating the gifted child's learning. Parents who have tried to find a good piano teacher or an appropriate educational toy for their child understand the technique of facilitation. The best teachers are those who share what they know and teach their students how to find out the rest! Is that something a parent can do?

I did not always think so. Several years before homeschooling my own children, my sister-in-law began homeschooling all five of her children. As a professional educator, I took it as a personal affront. Did she think she could educate her children better than someone who went to college four years to know how to do that? She most certainly did! Her success was apparent in her children's behavior, their practical abilities, and common sense. So I was sure that with my teaching background I too could be successful.

Although it is true that many families homeschool for religious reasons and a few are political and religious extremists, M.P. Dunleavey in his article "Staying Close to Home," reports in Publishers Weekly, that "... about half of the homeschoolers in America do so for secular reasons that stem from their unhappiness with the educational system and the belief that they can teach their children better. And a growing number of parents fall into homeschooling when, for a variety of reasons, their children need more attention or direction than most schools can provide."

The attention and direction a parent can provide at home for a child with special needs (i.e., the gifted child) is much more concentrated than what is provided in a traditional classroom setting. My own two children have reaped the benefits from such an approach to learning. My son homeschooled for three years from the fifth through the seventh grades. During that time he was able to remediate in areas that were not his strengths. Even though he had participated in a program for the gifted since the first grade, he had many gaps in his education. They did not occur because the skills were never taught, but they were taught rapidly and with little repetition. After homeschooling for two years, his standardized achievement test scores rose substantially in all areas. He also learned responsibility and became more autonomous in his learning. Role modeling during those impressionable middle school years was provided by his parents, great grandparents, and many male adults who worked with him in a variety of mentorship programs. At the end of the seventh grade he wanted to go back to public school. The intellectual and emotional skills he had acquired at home prepared him for reentry into the system and he is succeeding quite well now at the local high school.

Passion is what motivates my daughter. Her passion lies in animal science and behavior, a subject that was never covered during her elementary school years and is not offered today at the local high school. She continues to receive her education at home as a junior in high school, because it affords her the opportunity to work with mentors in her field of interest, hold a part-time job, be involved in numerous clubs and competitions, and still get a quality education four hours a day. Her social life is as busy as any teenager and her relationships with adults are far beyond most of her grade level peers. How is this possible from a young woman who has spent the last four years learning at home?

The answer is affective education. According to the editor of the *Gifted Education Review*, affective education is a topic that is still top on the list of current trends in gifted education. Self confidence, self esteem, self respect, pride, determination, responsibility and perseverance are all vital parts of my daughter's affect. As she homeschools, my daughter personally works on traits that enhance her self concept. A team consisting of her parents, siblings, extended family members, mentors, and selected friends (adult and teenagers) also contribute to her success in building her confidence to a level that affords her the opportunities of being a life long learner.

An important component of any gifted child's affective education must be the development of a sense of responsibility and service to the home, to the community and the world. Responsibility just naturally develops in homeschooled children. They are more likely to help around the house just because they are at home so much. Because so much more of their time is devoted to educating that child, parents expect and deserve assistance in running the household. Students who learn at home are more responsible for their learning. Mother or father will introduce a lesson and be available for questions, but the child is responsible for completing the task and teaching him/herself the next task, if possible. As an eighth grader, my daughter, who hated math in elementary school and declared she was no good at it, taught herself algebra with very little assistance from me. Not only did she grow to

love mathematics that year, but her self confidence and self respect grew as well. If you ask her today what her favorite subject is in school, her answer is math!

For many persons, service is a natural extension of responsibility. Those who serve demonstrate responsibility beyond that which benefits the self. In a keynote address by teacher/author Nancy Johnson, she called service "passionate causes." She advocated gifted children finding a cause to serve as a way to get beyond their own troubles and worries. I think there are additional reasons for soliciting the service of gifted students. Service helps to develop the whole child, especially the affect. It usually puts students under the supervision of quality adult role models and often promotes leadership skills. And do not underestimate the value of children just feeling good about themselves, because they helped someone in need.

Even when educators and parents see the benefits of homeschooling the gifted, two main concerns still arise. How do homeschooled children learn socialization skills and will they be accepted into college? How can parents and educators support home education if in fact these problems exist?

I have not found that the social skills of homeschooled children present problems or limitations. It is a fact that homeschooling allows parents to limit and control the amount of negative peer modeling to which their gifted child is subjected. Most parents and educators do not see that as a drawback. What home education does provide are numerous opportunities for gifted students to work with and model adults. These adults may be chosen to model behavior, skills in the child's passion areas and/or positive values. Because gifted children typically relate better to adults and older peers, homeschooling provides the time and structure to nurture those relationships. When homeschooling, the gifted child often forms relationships with other children based on common interests and values rather than choosing friends just because they are the same age. Isn't that how we as adults choose our friends?

As far as homeschooling limiting a child's chances for acceptance or success in college or the world, keep in mind a disturbing fact for public educators. Many of our most gifted leaders, scientists, musicians, artists, etc. were educated at home or in private schools. Most of us have heard the horror stories of the terrible experiences Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein had in school. The point is not to shake an angry finger at public education, but support the fact that intelligent, successful people have received their education at home. The argument is of course that many of those famous people educated at home did so during a time when there were no public schools or those schools were simply not as good as they are today. This is true. It is also true that today homeschooled children are accepted into Ivy League schools and awarded scholarships.

I know of a young man who began attending the Air Force Academy in what would have been his senior year in public school. He was accepted to several schools, all of which were impressed by his homeschooling career and had prior success with homeschooling students. The colleges my daughter is interested in attending have notified us that they accept homeschooled students as they do all students, based on their ACT or SAT scores.

I would encourage any high school student anticipating entering a college to check out entrance requirements ahead of time. Those students who homeschool need to keep a portfolio of their best work, letters of recommendation from adult mentors, and a transcript with a class description of all courses they received credit for outside an accredited school. When my daughter entered high school, she enrolled with an accredited correspondence school to satisfy the basic requirements for a diploma. Most of her electives are courses we have designed together to meet her specific interests, goals, and passions.

While I sing the praises of home education for the gifted, I am not proposing that it is the only way or the best way for *all* gifted children to learn. Homeschooling places many demands on the family. It is possible, but very difficult to homeschool in a one parent family where resources may be limited. Who will watch the children while the parent is at work? Where will the parent find the time and energy to school his/her child after working all day? For the same reasons, it is very difficult for a family where both parents work full time to homeschool their children. I have known it to work, however, when both parents are involved in the teaching and they have complimentary or flexible working hours, or their employment is based in the home.

If economics is not a factor, personality can be. Some parents are not comfortable with the concept and many gifted children would abhor the idea of their parent being their teacher. Other parents find disciplining a gifted child very demanding. How could they possibly make it through a whole day, every day teaching their child at home? The answer is, without support, they cannot. The homeschooling parent needs the support of his/her spouse to provide time away from the children. They need support from other homeschooling parents and possibly professional help to address both behavioral and academic issues. Is the day coming when public schools will adopt a home education model to provide some of the support needed by homeschooling families? A movement has already begun in some states for such cooperation.

In Colorado, school districts are required to provide standardized achievement testing for homeschooled children during specific years. Colorado homeschooled children are also allowed to participate in any extra

curricular/after school programs provided by their local school. Some school districts let students come to school for two or four hours a day to participate in certain subjects and receive the rest of their education at home. How could the students described previously benefit from such a cooperative approach to education?

Remember Lilly? She had a passion for literature and creative writing. Her frustration came from always being interrupted by things she found uninteresting and unimportant. Homeschooling could provide Lilly with hours of unstructured time to pursue her passions. She could go to school for a couple hours a day to get those basic skills in which she is not particularly interested. The rest of her school day could be spent doing independent studies with products involving the writing she loves.

How about Don? He is not successful in school for two reasons. First, traditional classrooms often teach facts and have little interest in creativity unless in isolation (i.e., art, music, drama, etc.). Second, creativity is a slow process. It can be very time consuming to create and then interpret and evaluate the creation. The fact is, the whole world is not creative nor does the whole world value creativity. Through homeschooling Don will learn the facts, but his parents can help him find a creative way to do that. They can also help him to develop the more logical thinking processes that he is uncomfortable using. He could then participate in at least one subject at school that requires him to use logical thinking skills. Don could also become a part of any extracurricular programs that involve his creative abilities.

Sally has a big problem. She is very verbal, which for the most part has been an asset to her school career. However, the attention she receives from her gift of gab causes animosity among her peers. Homeschooling could solve many of Sally's problems by immersing her in activities with other students who share her interests and abilities. Then Sally will be interacting with students who appreciate her abilities and a much healthier form of competition will abide. This can be done by placing her in private and/or public programs that offer a variety of activities for the verbally gifted. Sally would be an asset to the school's debate team or drama club. It could be beneficial for her to participate in those classes at school that require little or no discussion so she can learn to be a member of a class, not always the leader.

Sheila is a child at risk. Her perfectionism is so great that she will never know her full potential until she feels comfortable enough to take risks. I do not believe that traditional school is a safe place to start. Home should be a safe haven; a place where Sheila can try something new, experience failure, learn from it and go on. The humiliation children often face in school, more often handed out by heartless peers than an insensitive teacher, is real. Such humiliation is demeaning and often debilitating. Sheila needs a big dose of positive self esteem. She needs to build confidence in her decisions and abilities. Only then will she truly succeed. Sheila may need to stay out of the school environment for several years before she can reenter with success. At the time of reentry, the school may need to allow her to come back for one, then two, then three classes and so on until she feels comfortable and confident.

Tad is a quick, independent learner who finds himself alienated from his peers because of his abilities. Much like Sally, Tad needs to be with peers who share his abilities. It is very possible that most of Tad's intellectual peers are adults. A mentor program could be set up for Tad where two days a week he goes to someone's office to experience technical training. Tad can learn the facts he needs from the computer and can get on line with other system users to share ideas, play games, and swap information. He could benefit from attending some vocational classes that teach him the life skills required of most people regardless of their IQ. After school hours Tad could be on the school football team, join the technology or computer club and enjoy being a "normal" teenager without the "geek" stigma to follow him.

Homeschooling could also solve the problems those parents were having with their children's gifted classrooms. Nancy could offer a stimulating and challenging environment for Sarah every hour of every day without missing a thing or having to do extra work. Steve's son could work at his own pace, reviewing and repeating those subjects he finds difficult and speeding through those subjects at which he excels. Charles and Darla could provide a 1:2 teacher/pupil ratio in their own home while educational reform is at work in the public schools.

As educators, our idealistic goal is to find the best form of education for each individual. We are naturally concerned about academics, but our concern also includes the child's affective development and acquisition of necessary life skills to become a healthy, whole, productive adult. Alternative programs exist across our nation in an attempt to reach such goals. I am not proposing that school districts offer homeschooling as their sole program for the gifted. A home education model should, however, be respected, encouraged, supported, and considered by educators as a viable alternative program for all students, including the gifted.

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JONATHAN SWIFT (1667-1745): A NEED FOR GIFTED READERS

BY MICHAEL E. WALTERS NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"But, as those countries which I have described do not appear to have a desire of being conquered, and enslaved, murdered or driven out by colonies, nor abound either in gold, silver, sugar or tobacco; I did humbly conceive they were by no means proper objects of our zeal, or valor, or our interest." Gulliver's Travels, Chapter 12.

Gulliver's Travels (1726) is a perennial favorite of gifted readers because it appeals to their sensibility throughout their lifetime. As children, it is the adventure and humorous situations such as tiny people, giants, talking horses, etc. that tickle the imagination. Adolescents enjoy the mockery and satire of this book which they share with Swift as co-conspirators against the hypocrisies of the adult world, e.g., unjust systems of government falsely constructed upon ideas of human betterment and morality. Then, as adults, the most delicious intellectual feast of all occurs: to devour this book as morsels of gourmet insights into human folly. Moreover, based on our adult experiences of the human condition, we have come to terms with the foibles that Jonathan Swift (through Lemuel Gulliver) responded to -- greed, arrogance, anger and ambition.

In our contemporary era, Swift has been attacked by both academicians of the right and the left. For those like Allan Bloom (The Closing of the American Mind, 1987), the consensus is that Swift is a pessimist, misanthrope and representative of the anti-rationalist trend. To the adherents of deconstructionism and the New Historicism, Swift is another example of the Western European-male hegemonic attitude. Both Swift's life and writings prove that these approaches are ideologically biased viewpoints. On the contrary, Swift was an anti-misanthrope because he was constantly defending the oppressed and showing how flawed political reasoning was being used to suppress humanity. In 1714 he was exiled to his birthplace, Dublin, Ireland, during his middle age because of his political incorrectness. As the dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, he championed the Irish Catholic cause although he was an Anglican clergyman. As a solution to the Irish problem, he wrote a satire, A Modest Proposal (1729), where he suggested that the Irish Catholics should sell their babies to the English as gourmet food. In Gulliver's Travels, he attacks the Europeans as constantly fighting wars over trifles. These trifles include "where to break an egg." The Lilliputians slaughter the population of an entire island over the issue of which end of an egg should be broken to eat. This massacre was started because the grandfather of the Lilliputian king cut his finger while breaking an egg. As for Allan Bloom's depiction of Swift as an anti-rationalist, one almost wonders if Bloom read the same books as I did. In my reading, I encountered Swift's critique of pseudo-science and the misuse of science. When Gulliver travels to the floating island of Laputa, he encounters individuals who distort reality and common sense. Examples of this attitude are that Laputa's tailors are so abstract that they cannot make properly fitted clothes -- and no one on this island is aware of this fact. Another example of this distortion of reality is that the people's food is carved into mathematical and musical shapes.

The scientists on Laputa need their servants' help to constantly awake them from their coma-like trance; the servants hit their masters with blown up bladders full of pebbles that are attached to poles. The entire thrust of Swift's satire is to make the reader ponder whether the Western European-male is the best there is. Do the deconstructionists perceive the Yahoo humanoid savages of Gulliver's Travels as promoting Western European-male hegemony? Will the New Historicists realize that Swift is our contemporary? Does his ridicule of the legal, medical and political establishments in Gulliver's Travels ring a contemporary bell?

One of Swift's other satires is The Battle of the Books (1704). It reads like a parody of the current debate over the literary canon. In this work, the library books, the ancient classics, and writings of the "age of enlightenment" rationalists are fighting each other. The "modernists" claim their intellectual superiority based on the invention and uses of gunpowder. One must read Swift as a gifted reader -- not as an ideologue. The gifted reader will see him as the progenitor of Franz Kafka and George Orwell. These writers represent the anti-totalitarian and pro-human point of view. ➢➢➢➢➢

BOOK REVIEW FROM *GIFTED EDUCATION NEWS-PAGE*

Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership by Howard Gardner (1995). Basic Books: New York.

Although this study of leadership has wide applications to education and society, Gardner's book is of special interest to educators of the gifted because it provides many insights into the leadership characteristics of highly able individuals in science, social change, politics and business. The author helps readers to understand the intellectual roots of leadership by analyzing its cognitive basis in a book that has three parts, each containing two or more chapters. Part I, "A Framework For Leadership," explains how leadership follows a developmental and cognitive pattern, and discusses the basis for leadership in stories. Part II, "Case Studies: From Domains To Nations," examines the characteristics of great leaders. Part III, "Conclusion: Leadership That Looks Forward," discusses two leaders (Monnet and Gandhi) who were concerned with international issues and solutions to common problems related to freedom, democracy and world peace. Part III also includes a summary (Chapter 15: Lessons from the Past, Implications for the Future) of the constants of leadership, twentieth-century leadership, and guidelines for effective leadership. The two appendices present a tabular summary of the characteristics of leaders discussed by Gardner.

In the first chapter (Introduction: A Cognitive Approach to Leadership), Gardner delineates the dimensions of leadership such as the direct-indirect continuum, and he discusses the types of stories leaders tell about themselves and their audience/followers. George C. Marshall, Eleanor Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr. were direct leaders while J. Robert Oppenheimer, Robert M. Hutchins and Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. began as indirect leaders but moved to the direct end of this continuum later. In subsequent chapters, the author examines dynamic leaders who sparked major changes in their domains of interest rather than individuals concerned with maintaining the status quo. He has made an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of the above leaders and of Margaret Mead, Pope John XXIII, Margaret Thatcher, Jean Monnet and Mahatma Gandhi. Moreover, he has included an extensive discussion and analysis of the leaders of the Second World War including Chiang Kai-Shek, Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle and Adolf Hitler.

Gardner argues that leaders exert their primary influence through the stories they tell and the embodiment of these stories in various traits. For example, Winston Churchill emphasized the grandeur of the British Empire and genius of the English people, while Franklin D. Roosevelt stressed the idea that "government should be activist, especially in times of crisis." (p. 337). Margaret Mead stressed that we can learn a great deal about our own lives by studying other cultures, and Eleanor Roosevelt believed that we must unite to help the downtrodden -- women and blacks who are discriminated against and third world citizens. Gifted students should learn about these stories because they have had a great influence on national and world history.

Gardner's book provides a creative and unique opportunity to analyze leadership in terms of interpretations of the self, the group, values and meaning, and conceptions of the world. He summarizes his position on the importance of stories in the following statement: "I have argued that a key -- perhaps *the* key -- to leadership, as well as to the garnering of a following, is the effective communication of a story. While my definition of a story is broad, it calls attention to a common core. I maintain that the most fundamental stories fashioned by leaders concern issues of personal and group identity; those leaders who presume to bring about major alterations across a significant population must in some way help their audience members think through who they are. . . ." (p. 62). Gifted students should ask different questions about the leadership characteristics of contemporary national figures such as -- What are the major stories conveyed by President Clinton, Robert Dole, Newt Gingrich, and Colin Powell? How do they translate their particular stories into action? What is the impact of these stories on American citizens? How do they influence the national psyche? They can use this excellent book as a guide for analyzing these and other leaders' stories. Gardner has accomplished the difficult task of identifying common elements of apparently different types of leaders. As a result, he has helped all of us to better understand ourselves.

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I started publishing this periodical nine years ago in the spring of 1987. Our goals then were to "serve as a forum for discussing current issues on educating the gifted, and to present the best possible ideas concerning how to improve this field." Encouragement received from Michael Walters and James LoGiudice helped sustain the work involved in producing *GEPQ* during those early years. In the first issue (April 1987), an article by LoGiudice emphasized the need for developing a rigorous curriculum for the gifted. The ideas he expressed are even more valid today than in 1987, even though this field has changed considerably during the last nine years. In 1987, the national trends in educating the gifted were at their peak, whereas a serious decline has occurred in current programs and funding for the gifted. One of the primary reasons for continuing to publish this quarterly has been the strong support received from our friends and colleagues in gifted education and related fields. Through the years, they have emphasized that *GEPQ* provides an alternative and critical voice to more traditional viewpoints concerning the identification and education of gifted students. They have strongly encouraged us to continue publishing this periodical up to and beyond the year 2000. To help *GEPQ* survive and thrive, I have requested that the following individuals serve as members of an advisory panel. All of them have graciously agreed to provide advice and ideas related to continuing and expanding *GEPQ*. Their willingness to be on this panel is greatly appreciated and provides further encouragement to this publisher, his authors and the readers of *GEPQ*.

Members of Advisory Panel for *Gifted Education Press Quarterly*

Ms. Sharon Buzzard -- Supervisor of Gifted Education, East Liverpool Ohio Schools and Past President of the Ohio Association for Gifted Children

Dr. James Delisle -- Professor and Co-Director of *SENG*, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

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Dr. Virgil S. Ward -- Emeritus Professor of Gifted Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

Ms. Susan Winebrenner -- Consultant, Lombard, Illinois

Articles in Current Issue

Stephen-Schroeder Davis discusses the results of his dissertation research (University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN, 1995) which concentrated on studying the attitudes of teenagers regarding high academic achievement. James Delisle and James Webb describe an important national organization for studying the social and emotional development of the gifted, *SENG*. In addition, this issue includes an inspiring speech that Diane Grybek made to gifted students, and Michael Walters discusses the works of a genius of English literature, E.M. Forster. ●●●●●

Maurice Fisher Publisher

ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: THE PROBLEM CONTINUES

BY STEPHEN SCHROEDER-DAVIS ELK RIVER, MINNESOTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

My recently completed doctoral dissertation required a content analysis of 3,514 essays written by Minnesota secondary students in response to these questions: "Would you rather be the best-looking, smartest, or most athletic student in your class? Why? Why didn't you choose the others?"

These essays and thousands like them are written each month by children in grades 1-12 for the Minneapolis Star Tribune's "Mindworks" column, a forum for young writers edited by Misti Snow. Ms. Snow and the Star Tribune graciously allowed me access to all 12,000 essays for the month of January, 1993, when the above questions generated one of the highest response rates in the 10 year history of this unique feature. I chose to concentrate my efforts on students in grades 7-12, as I teach in a junior high school and have always been interested in adolescent issues.

Each month Ms. Snow publishes excerpts from the students' essays and writes an accompanying summary to frame the issues raised by the young authors. I found the excerpts and Snows' essay both compelling and disturbing. For this particular feature, Snow also included an approximation of the responses each category received: "most intelligent" (47%), "most athletic" (37%), and "best-looking" (10%). Six percent were not categorized as they did not address the questions, were illegible, etc.

The relatively high percentage choosing most intelligent was intriguing, as it appeared to contradict previous investigations, notably the seminal research of Coleman (1961) and Tannenbaum (1962). These two landmark studies indicated that "brilliance" - alone (Coleman) and "brilliance" - coupled with "studiousness" (Tannenbaum) were viewed by the vast majority of adolescents with indifference, if not disdain. In Coleman's investigation, for example, when students were forced to choose between brilliance, popularity, or athleticism (boys) or "a leader in activities" (girls), only 30% selected brilliance.

The possibility that the high percentage selecting most intelligent (47%) might not tell the whole story - in fact, might be an overly optimistic "false positive," - is foreshadowed by this excerpt from Snow's summary:

"But mixed in with the benefits described were thousands of tales about the 'dark side' of being the smartest. Both those who have experienced it and those who haven't told of how difficult it is to be intelligent because of the teasing, taunting and bullying smart students receive from their classmates.

"To be smartest means to be called such nicknames as these: pencil-head, suck-up, study-buddy, brown-nose, teacher's pet, Mr. Brain, Polly Perfect, egghead, smarty pants, brainiac, smartazoid, dweeb, wimp, and the most common - nerd, dork, and geek.

"The common view of smart kids is that they have few friends, don't know how to play and spend hours reading the dictionary. They're bullied into doing other people's homework. They sometimes get beaten up. They're often used by classmates when it's convenient and otherwise ignored or mistreated. Very few kids said that being smart makes kids popular."

My investigation was an attempt to methodically test Snow's impressionistic overview of the issues and percentages involved. The overarching question was: "Does intelligence come with a price for secondary students?"

Determining Categories

Initially, I needed to verify Snow's original categorizations relative to both the student choices (intelligence, athleticism, or appearance) and their rationale (the answers to the questions "Why? Why didn't you choose the others?").

Snow's estimates regarding the three categories were quite accurate. The actual percentages were: "most intelligent," 53.8%, "most athletic," 37.3%, and "best-looking," 8.9%. Her seven major rationale categories were also extremely accurate, and fit approximately 95% of the responses. They were:

(1) Smartest chosen for assumed post high school (scholarship, career, monetary) benefits; (2) Smartest chosen for immediate academic benefits (reduced homework, easier grades); (3) Smartest chosen for immediate peer social benefits (increased popularity and prestige); (4) Most athletic chosen for assumed post high school benefits; (5) Most athletic chosen for immediate peer social benefits; (6) Best-looking chosen for assumed post high school benefits (modeling, a movie career); and (7) Best-looking chosen for immediate peer social benefits.

Although a number of alternative rationales reemerged during my analysis, these seven covered the vast majority of essays. The most significant rationale to emerge beyond the pre-determined ones listed above was "fear of

anti-intellectual stigma," which essayists experienced (or perpetrated) in various forms: teasing, bullying, harassment, and exploitation (providing answers on tests or assignments) being the most common.

Performing the Content Analysis

The essays were scanned quickly to confirm/amend Snow's broad category counts. In most cases, the students followed standard essay protocols; an introductory paragraph and topic sentence ("I would choose best-looking because..."), the main body of the essay, and a concluding paragraph, so categorization was relatively easy and usually matched Snow's original determination.

More difficult was determining the respondents' primary rationale. This was ultimately a judgment call, with the rationale stated first, most vehemently, or with the most supporting detail usually indicating the students' intended rationale and subsequent category classification. Those essays not fitting the major categories were classified as "other" and were analyzed and classified separately.

Results of the Content Analysis: Those Selecting Best-Looking

This was not a popular category, as a total of only 312 students (8.9%) selected best-looking. Females were twice as likely as males to do so. The immediate social advantages (popularity and prestige) of good looks were the primary rationale offered, although a few students alluded to the post high school rationale of a modeling or acting career. Of more significance was the fact that of 312 respondents, fully 44% alluded to or advanced anti-intellectualism as a factor in their decision making process sufficient to incline them to avoid most intelligent and select best-looking instead. For example, Kay, 18, stated: "Being the smartest would mean being used by others to get good grades (either by cheating or copying). It would also cause resentment because a high test score raises the curve.

Not surprisingly, this group evidenced a strong concern for the superficial qualities of appearance with an attendant concern for popularity. Almost 70% offered immediate social benefits as their rationale, were well aware of the retrograde effect intelligence may have on popularity, and said so in their essays. Those choosing best-looking were the most likely to allude to anti-intellectualism.

Females were more likely to allude to fear of stigmatization than were boys, whereas boys were more likely to advance negative stereotypes with comments such as, "It seems the brainy ones are home studying and doing homework, while the good looking ones are out with their friends or girlfriends having a good time." - Matt, 18.

Results of the Content Analysis: Those Selecting Most Athletic

The sheer number of responses (1,310, or 37.3%) in this category, as well as the rationale offered and the gender and age differences, elevate the significance of "most athletic" beyond that of "best-looking."

The gender differences, although significant, were not as overwhelming as might be anticipated: 758 males (46.7%) vs. 552 females (29.1%) preferred most athletic. Both genders clearly recognized the social benefits of athleticism. The gender difference emerged relative to the "long term benefits" of athletics; very few females saw athletics as a viable career option, while many males (especially those in junior high) appeared to view mere participation in junior high sports as a path to collegiate and professional stardom.

Significantly, junior high males selected most athletic as frequently as most intelligent and best-looking combined, an orientation which may explain the frustration voiced by many junior high educators evaluating the scholarly efforts of this population.

This result was disconcerting on several levels. First, the actual chances of a high school athlete successfully pursuing a professional career range from 4 in 100,00 for white males (the most likely), to 4 in 100,000,000 for black females (the least likely) (Miracle & Rees, 1994). Second, the enormous prestige and focus bestowed on athletes by the media, community and school leaders, and peers necessarily diminishes the attention and nurturance afforded scholars.

This is a severe problem which appears to be growing worse. As sociologist Christopher Hurn (1985) has written, the schools' "distinctive dilemma" is the problem of motivating and teaching a captive population, many of whom would rather be elsewhere, so athletics are offered as a combination reward and incentive, with the implicit threat of revocation if certain (minimal) standards are not maintained. The danger inherent in this Faustian bargain was noted by Coleman (1961) when he observed that by using athletics to engage students, we risk relegating academics to secondary status while making athletics primary.

I submit that in far too many schools and for far too many students, this has already happened.

In Coleman's study (1961), athletics were the top priority among youth in all 10 of the high schools he studied, and

the "pure athlete" received twice the recognition and social rewards than did the "pure scholar." Tannenbaum (1962) found athleticism to be the key determinant for social acceptance in his study of 615 New York City high school juniors. Athletes were also the favored population in Cramond & Martin's (1987) replication of Tannenbaum's study. The population they studied was experienced teachers!

More recently, an Educational Communications, Inc. (1990) survey of 2,000 senior high students found that 66% felt that "... student athletes get more respect/acclaim than student scholars."

Add to this body of research the prevalence of community billboards, parades, quarterback clubs, and bonfires honoring athletes, the media's saturation coverage of athletics and other (nonacademic) celebrities, and advertisers' relentless marketing of athletes, and it should not be surprising that athletes continue to be the "governing elite" (Geertz, 1983) in most schools.

In my study, the reverence for athletics was reflected in several potentially injurious ways:

(1) Respondents in the junior high selected most athletic with almost the same frequency as most intelligent and best-looking combined; (2) The enormous social benefits of athleticism - for both genders - was the most frequently listed rationale. Athleticism was approximately 55 times more powerful than intelligence for procuring popularity and prestige among peers, and was also listed as a means of obtaining special privileges from teachers; (3) The other primary rationale - a collegiate and/or professional career - competed with popularity and prestige, especially among boys. These respondents are headed for twin disappointments: not only are college and professional careers unlikely, but time spent practicing - sometimes at 6:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. - erodes both their interest in and ability to pursue scholarship, and may therefore result in academic problems; and (4) Perhaps most disturbing was the fact that students choosing most athletic alluded to or advanced anti-intellectualism twice as often as those who chose most intelligent (453 vs. 186).

Representative student excerpts include:

"I would choose to be the most athletic, more than looks, more than being smart. Being smart gets you places, but you don't see anyone smart who's famous. They (famous people) are all singers, actors, or athletes. That's why I want to be an athlete." - Eric, 12
"I would choose to be the most athletic. I think people who are athletic are more respected than attractive people and much more respected than smart people. There are many reasons I believe this. One reason is that in my school athletic people are more respected than smart people. If someone is good in sports then they automatically make instant friends." - Derik, 15
"I would choose to be the most athletic ... (because) if you're not smart you can get a nerd to do homework for you." - Kyle, 14
"The reason I would choose to be the most athletic person in my class is because our school is so into sports that choosing to be the most athletic would be obvious." - Jill, 15

Over 37% of the respondents selected most athletic, a disturbing enough fact by itself. An equally discouraging subtext was the number of respondents who overtly acknowledged the preeminent benefits of intelligence while selecting most athletic as the safer choice. Their willingness to sacrifice their intellects (even hypothetically) to appease peers consumed with athletic fervor was most unfortunate. Matt, 15, and Brenda, 13, exemplify this group:

"I might choose being the smartest because you could really get good grades, but on the other hand, people would be pressuring you to give them answers. Not only that, you would get teased by a lot of kids in today's society."
"I didn't take the smartest person because I couldn't take everyone teasing me. And some wouldn't like me because they say I would be the teacher's pet. And yet it would be nice to be on the honor role and learning all sorts of new and interesting things ..."

The wistful ending to Brenda's excerpt saddens me. How many students would pursue ideas more passionately if they weren't encumbered by the ridiculous stereotypes and deliberate slights aimed at intellectuals? And why aren't great athletes derided as "coaches' pets?"

Results of the Content Analysis: Those Selecting Most Intelligent

Readers may disagree with my assessment, but I find it appalling that barely half (53.8%) of the 3,514 students in this sample selected most intelligent. To be fair, that figure surpassed the 30% in Coleman's (1961) study, and there was demonstrable maturation toward an intellectual orientation for both genders as students moved toward graduation. That said, there still exists both the fact that almost half the respondents (and, in one subpopulation, junior high boys, more than half) selected something other than intelligence as their preference, as well as the additional concerns listed below:

(1) *Nine* of 3,514 students (.3%) offered increased popularity as their rationale for selecting most intelligent. While

popularity may be both ephemeral and superficial, it is nonetheless important to most adolescents. As these essays make clear, many are willing to compromise their abilities and achievements to appease envious peers; (2) The stigma of high intelligence is common knowledge among junior-senior high students. Seven-hundred and seventy-seven respondents (22.1%) alluded to or advanced anti-intellectualism in their essays. Some did so even while selecting most intelligent. Many more did so while voicing fear of sanctions that would befall them if they chose most intelligent, and so selected something else. And some appeared to support the stereotypes and so dismissed most intelligent immediately. Again, it seems logical to assume that such beliefs would result in the underachievement gifted kids too often demonstrate; and (3) Approximately 80% of those selecting most intelligent did so for the perceived long term benefits intelligence offers. While the students' farsightedness is encouraging, the down side is that for many, there exists only long term benefits. It's both a tragedy and a scandal that a discerning, inquisitive mind is a social handicap at just the time children are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure and subsequently can be made to feel both afflicted and blessed with their intelligence.

These essays were typical of the ambivalence expressed by many:

"But there are disadvantages to being a junior Einstein. Everybody would think I was a nerd. I'd be the first to go down in dodge ball. People would pick on me and throw my books in a puddle. And I would be extremely unpopular." - Tim, 12
"But if I was smart, people might be mad at me for being right all the time. I would score good grades so everybody would ask for the answers to tests and stuff and I might get caught giving them away, so that's how I see being smart as a disadvantage, but I think I will get farther in life if I were smart." - Robert, 14
"Being the smartest kid might not be a piece of cake in school, but this special gift would pay off down the road." - Angle, 15
"The choice is between being popular for three years or successful for life. I plan for the future and choose success." - Alicia, 17
"... if I had to choose I would risk having no friends; I would choose being the smartest in class." - Barbara, 15

Barbara has stated precisely what Miraca Gross (1989) has labeled the "forced-choice dilemma" of gifted youth: intimacy vs. achievement. Only in a culture deeply conflicted about intelligence could such a poignant predicament present itself to vulnerable children. And only in America could the dilemma be most intense within the typical public school, an institution supposedly dedicated to developing the life of the mind.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present author joins a long list of researchers (Coleman, 1961; Tannenbaum, 1962; Brown, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1992; Coleman & Cross, 1988; Gross, 1989; Purcell, Gable, & Caillard, 1995; Singal, 1991; Snow, 1993) who found the price to be paid for (demonstrating) high intelligence is potential rejection from one's peers. While it is certainly true that not all youth reject intelligence, generic peer culture (the cumulative weight of adolescent opinion) certainly does. Brown (1992, p.10) states:

". . .peer pressures direct high school students toward moderate levels of achievement but stops well short of encouraging true devotion to scholarship. . .it imposes upper (as well as lower) limits upon the intellectual effort that students can put forth without fearing some sanctions from their peers."

Sadly, it seems many adolescents view high intelligence with similar (though perhaps more intense) opprobrium as they do any deviation from the "mythical norm" (Howley, Howley, & Pendarvis, 1995, p.200), though in most every other case, it is a deficiency (of money, looks, athleticism) that is stigmatized, rather than an abundance.

The crucial point here is that the values extant within peer culture - including the unattainable, and from my view, undesirable - "mythical norm" - are derived from adult values expressed in the media, local communities, and within schools. If this is true, these values can be modified to create a more humane and appropriate egalitarianism, that of ". . .according respect to individuals whose circumstances differ. . .rather than the presumption of conformity to a mythical norm." (Howley, Howley, & Pendarvis, 1995, p.200).

Presumably, this respect would extend even to those whose brilliance and work ethic distinguishes them from their age peers.
How might this be done? Beginning with the outside circle in the concentric circles of influence, I would recommend the following:

(1) Community billboards and calendars should include schedules for all teams and all competitions, and should highlight the variety of non-competitive forms of intense engagement (art shows, photography displays, public readings, plays, concerts, etc.) specific to the community; (2) Local papers and radio stations should promote and highlight scholarly and artistic efforts with the same regularity, professionalism, and fervor currently reserved

for athletics; (3) Community banquets, awards, and scholarships should be given for scholarly and artistic achievement as well as for athletic prowess; and (4) The mere listing of honor roll students should be enhanced with feature articles and photographs of particularly interesting and noteworthy achievements, detailing the stories and the processes that resulted in the high grades or high class rank. If this is done consistently over a period of time, it should become easier for secondary schools to more consistently embrace and promote academics and the life of the mind.

Moving to the second circle (school climate) and dealing specifically with the current athletic hegemony:

(1) Make pepfests infrequent and optional, as mandatory attendance and dismissal from class may send the wrong message to impressionable students; (2) Honor all forms of achievement. Perhaps seasonal ceremonies honoring all teams as their respective seasons conclude would be more egalitarian than pepfests and banquets reserved primarily for athletic teams. This would also create opportunities for recognition of students who participate in non-competitive endeavors such as service learning, charity and volunteer work, or who have published or displayed works of merit; (3) Mandate that career units include statistics on the likelihood of athletic scholarships and professional athletic careers to paint a realistic picture for secondary students, many of whom, according to the present study, need to be disabused of the mythology that high school sports participation is a promising path to athletic fame and fortune after graduation; (4) Institute academic/artistic lettering, and exalt the status of these programs to the status presently reserved for athletics; (5) Reduce or eliminate release time from school for participation in extracurriculars of all kinds whenever possible; (6) Reduce or eliminate practices and games which necessitate late nights and consequently compromise the subsequent school day for participants; (7) Require reasonable progress toward graduation and/or a minimum GPA for participation in extracurricular activities; (8) Hire academic/artistic activities directors comparable to athletic directors to recruit and coordinate participation in the many nonathletic extracurricular activities available for students; and (9) Assess school hallmarks such as banners and trophy cases to assure equitable placement and visibility for both athletic and nonathletic endeavors.

More general recommendations for school officials and students include:

(1) Treat anti-intellectual epithets and invectives as seriously as if they were sexual, religious or racial in nature; use existing policies to allow or force school officials to address such harassment; (2) Lobby for academic/artistic lettering, banquets, and recognition programs; then wear the letters and attend the programs. Scholar athletes can be especially helpful to nonathletic scholars by wearing both kinds of letters, thereby making academic lettering more immediately acceptable to classmates; (3) Examine the location and attention given to trophies, awards, ribbons, etc., won during extracurricular contests; insist that academic and artistic endeavors receive equal prominence to those of athletics; (4) Analyze both school and local newspapers. If a disparity exists between the coverage of scholarship and athletics, suggest ways to address the imbalance. Request equality in other forms of community recognition such as billboards, posters, and activities calendars.

And finally, recommendations for gifted advocates:

(1) Reintroduce and use the term "gifted" rather than its various euphemisms ("high-end learner," "high potential child," "accelerated learner," etc.) which are not useful in appeasing critics and often serve to both confuse and diffuse advocacy issues; (2) Resist calls to become absorbed within "general education" until and unless it can be demonstrated that general education can meet the needs of the gifted appropriately; (3) Practitioners should resist embracing school reforms (cooperative learning, outcome-based education, middle school philosophies, full inclusion) until the potential impact of these movements on gifted students has been examined. This need for resistance is especially true regarding the current orthodoxy of heterogeneous grouping; (4) The entire array of educational alternatives (post-secondary options, continuous progress, graduation standards, vouchers, privatization, etc.) should be continually evaluated for their potential impact on this population; (5) Funding and program mandates should be established; (6) Require at least one survey course for all prospective educators on the education of the gifted child; (7) The special education paradigm of the "least restrictive environment" should be applied, in court if necessary, to gifted children; (8) Schools with gifted programs, provisions, or advocates should make overt reference to the "forced-choice dilemma" as early as possible to help gifted children prepare for the tension between academic achievement and popularity; (9) A service learning, civic responsibility, or volunteer requirement should be instituted in secondary schools to establish the concept of community service to young people; and (10) Parents should talk with their children about the relative value of popularity, friendship, and achievement.

In summary, my investigation of 3,514 Minnesota secondary school students' attitudes to the superlatives of intelligence, athleticism, and appearance found some cause for optimism, as it was determined that a slight majority (53

percent) of the respondents preferred "most intelligent." In addition, maturation was evident, as students became significantly more likely to express a preference for intelligence as they aged.

There were also troubling findings. Junior high males expressed a preference for superlatives other than intelligence: 56 percent selected something other than most intelligent. This group also evidenced the disturbing and misguided assumption that athletic participation was likely to result in a professional sports career. A plurality (44.5 percent) of junior high males selecting most athletic offered long term benefits (scholarships or sports career) as their rationale for doing so.

Perhaps most troubling was the clear indication of a robust, pervasive anti-intellectualism overtly informing 22.1 percent of the responses. That 777 students would allude to the social stigma of intelligence without a specific prompt suggested that the present study unfortunately confirmed previous studies by Coleman (1961), Tannenbaum (1962), and others in finding that intelligence is not highly regarded by a significant number of secondary students, who seem to be reflecting the values and priorities of the culture at large.

Further research suggested by the present study includes:

(1) An exploration of the appeal of athletics and its possible relationship to anti-intellectualism. Respondents selecting most athletic were approximately two times more likely to acknowledge or advance anti-intellectualism than were those who selected most intelligent; (2) Continued research examining teacher attitudes toward intelligence and scholarship. The Cramond and Martin (1987) study, the Howley, Howley, and Pendarvis (1995) investigation, and Singal's (1991) observations suggest a need for such exploration; (3) An investigation into specific approaches that may hasten maturation toward an appreciation of intelligence and the concomitant reduction in its stigmatization. Are there ways to hasten and generalize this developmental trend so it is more pronounced among secondary students?; and (4) A search for the root causes of anti-intellectualism. The present author has advanced envy-based resentment as a primary cause. Are there other reasons? If so, what can be done to reduce this most unfortunate phenomenon?

Author's note: An expanded version of this article will appear in a forthcoming issue of The Journal of Secondary Gifted Education. ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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SUPPORTING THE EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF THE GIFTED: *SENG*

Dear Reader:

Pendulums swing and paradigms shift, but why do they have to do so in such wide arcs? The article that follows shares some of our frustrations with the field of study that has occupied our lives for the past generation: gifted child education. For just when we thought we were making headway with a sometimes skeptical public about the unique needs of gifted and talented children, we find that even some gifted child education "experts" question the presence of the social and emotional aspects to being gifted.

Through this article and our organization, *SENG* (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted), we hope to rekindle a flame that should never be extinguished: the right for gifted children to act gifted, to think deeply, to enjoy enthusiastically and to feel angst even before they know how to define it. We invite you to join us on our journey of rediscovery. There is too much at stake -- the mental health of our world's most able and sensitive children -- to not speak up in their defense.

Sincerely,
Jim Delisle and Jim Webb
Co-Directors, *SENG*

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF GIFTED CHILDREN: THE *SENG* PROGRAM OFFERS MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

BY JAMES T. WEBB, Ph.D. AND JIM DELISLE, Ph.D.
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At a recent meeting of the National Association for Gifted Children's Board of Directors, several members got into an extended discussion of "best practices" to be used with able learners. When the issue of affective concerns arose, some board members questioned whether there really were any social and emotional needs that were unique to gifted children. They wanted to see research -- hard data -- that proved the existence of such issues.

Jim Delisle, who was present, was puzzled and wondered if the question was being raised in jest. It was not. It appears that we must realize a sad truth: the field of gifted education has become so enmeshed in curricula, instruction, and educational reform that it has lost its soul (Delisle,

1995).

The gifted child education field was founded by psychologists such as Lewis Terman, Leta Hollingworth, and George and Annemarie Roeper, who supported special provisions for gifted learners precisely because the emotional make-up of these children differed markedly from that of their age-mates. They recognized that the mind, as keen as its insights might be, needed to have the company of the heart in order to be put to fullest use.

Yet psychologists and similar professionals are still largely unaware of the social and emotional needs of these children. They, like many in current society, accept the myth that "a bright mind will simply find its own way" and that "gifted kids are always a joy to have in the family," or they simply do not know that these youngsters are at higher risk for certain types of emotional and interpersonal difficulties.

Some of these problems are externally caused. For example, there are great pressures to conform to peer pressure, and to fit in with mediocrity. Our society is ambivalent as to whether it values individual excellence or fitting in with the mainstream. Our schools so often have "dumbed down" their curricula, but simultaneously left little challenge or room for achieving beyond the basic levels.

Other difficulties stem from the very nature of gifted children; though, because gifted children are such a diverse group, the span of these problems is great. Some frequently seen challenges include; the dyssynchrony between motor skills and mental level; intensity which seems to permeate everything; the lag of judgement behind intellect; lack of understanding of peers; excessive idealism, self-evaluation and perfectionism; questioning or challenging of traditions; and feelings of stress and depression (Webb, 1994).

Perhaps hard research data have not yet been generated in all of these areas. Yet parents and teachers recognize the validity of these concerns. We note with pleasure that many state associations, including the Michigan association, do recognize the importance of the psychological aspects of these children and their families.

With this in mind, we wish to announce the development of a resource that will be close at hand. On September 1, the Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted (*SENG*) Program – which has been located at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio – will be moving to Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. In its 14 years, *SENG* evolved into a national presence in response to the crying – yet overlooked – needs of families of gifted children and their teachers.

SENG evolved from a tragedy that had ties to Michigan. In 1980, a 16-year-old computer whiz kid named Dallas Egbert attended Michigan State University. He disappeared and was the subject of a nationwide search. His parents hired a private detective who found him working in the oil fields. After bringing him back to Dayton, they sought professional help. However, the help was too little too late, and young Dallas committed suicide. Through the efforts of his parents, the *SENG* program was begun and now enters a new phase.

This past year, *SENG* held its 14th Annual National Conference in Richmond,Virginia; prior conferences have been held literally from coast to coast. Topics in the conferences have been varied, important, and of real concern to parents and teachers. The presentations had practical, take-home value. The quality was high, and the atmosphere friendly – particularly to families. Always, there was focus on the social and emotional needs of gifted, talented, creative youngsters and their families – both at home and at school.

From the beginning, *SENG* established Parent Guided Discussion Groups. The model proved to be effective, describable, and exportable. We have taught others across the country – and internationally – what we have learned. These parent groups continue to be a key element of the *SENG* program.

The focus on involving parents is paramount, particularly because many parents say they are made to feel unwelcome or irrelevant in many other settings. Though both are important, it is generally recognized that good parenting can overcome poor teaching; but the reverse is seldom the case. And, in the current, largely dumbed-down, educational climate, teachers and administrators who want to reach out to gifted children find themselves caught by the very system that employs them. The educators need parent involvement desperately, for it is through informed parent involvement that changes can be made.

SENG has done workshops for numerous school systems and for parent advocacy groups to help highlight social and emotional concerns. The *SENG* office regularly is flooded with calls from parents wanting advise and guidance. We have sent countless packets of printed material, and spent thousands of hours on the phone – at no charge, thanks to donations received.

But the time for change has come. Wright State University offered its faculty an early retirement incentive program, and Dr. Webb decided – after weighing pros and cons – to avail himself of that opportunity. The window of that opportunity closed on August 31, 1995, and Dr. Webb will

move to Phoenix, Arizona, to begin a new chapter and to establish *SENG*-type programs on the West Coast.

Beginning in September – *SENG*'s 15th year – the primary base for *SENG* will be at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, where it will be headed by Dr. Jim Delisle. Dr. Jim Webb will be a consultant, but Dr. Delisle will be the main person. Dr. Joanne Rand Whitmore, who is Dean of the College of Education, will be instrumentally involved as well.

To locate *SENG* at Kent State University is an excellent fit for several reasons. Jim Delisle and Joanne Whitmore are giants in the field of gifted education, and have focused much effort on social and emotional needs of gifted children and their families. Both have published extensively in the area – for example, Joanne's classic book, *Giftedness, Conflict and Underachievement*, and Jim's *Gifted Kids Survival Guide II* and *Guiding the Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Youth* are well known. Their national leadership and visibility, as well as their sense of vision, will advance the causes of *SENG*.

Both have strong and enduring interests in social and emotional issues in the field, and a commitment to work with families as well as with school systems. They will institute at Kent State University, within a matter of a couple of months, virtually all of the current *SENG* programs – and will add additional dimensions to the programs as well.

What may be most exciting to Midwestern parents and teachers is that the 1996 *SENG* Conference will be held in Cleveland.

These are exciting times, and represent a wonderful opportunity for gifted children and their families. It is our hope that through *SENG*, the psychology of gifted children, which addresses social and emotional issues of giftedness, will no longer take a backseat to academic concerns.

The *SENG* program at Kent State University will flourish – of that we have no doubt. Hopefully, it will expand as we find additional funding sources. We invite you to help in this cause, both locally and nationally, and we hope to see you in Cleveland at the 1996 *SENG* Conference.◆

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TWO GIFTS AND THREE RESPONSIBILITIES

(Awards night talk to high school age gifted students completing highly challenging summer programs in mathematics, engineering and biomedicine at the University of South Florida Summer Program for Gifted Students.)

It's always awesome to meet with this group - the survivors - at the end of a summer session. You probably already know that by and large you are pretty incredible people, and this is not the first or last time someone will tell you this.

To a large extent this is a tremendous break. You enjoy the intellectual demands of school work more, and you will reap the rewards of greater opportunity in a world in which opportunity is shrinking for many. Part of this is literally a total gift: something you did nothing at all to earn. Part of your ability is a gift from heaven, a fortuitous combination of the genes of your parents.

Another part of that thing you have that makes you special is something you did work hard on: your motivation, stick-to-it-iveness and organization. Yet even in this less measurable area there are things that came to you as gifts. Some of these abilities are inborn also: functions of the hereditary structure of your brains. To some extent they are responses to the special care your parents and other people impacting your lives took to stimulate that brain and

increase various functions that were already there. But your capacity for benefitting by the things that came to you as gifts is yours alone. Like athletes who take the wonderful physical capacity with which they are born and train it until they are champions, you have taken your native ability, combined it willingly with the offerings of society - including parents, teachers and friends - and trained and tuned it. But there had to be something there to begin with. Just as there are people who take tennis lessons for years and never become more than barely adequate at the game, there are students who are just as motivated, just as hard working as you, students who may even have surpassed you grade-wise in younger years; and their reward is to see you fly by them with less effort. It may be hard for others to understand.

This is the other side of the coin. There is no free lunch. The gifts you were given are not gifts after all, but markers of responsibility. If life gave you more, you owe more to life.

There is no oath for gifted students, but I can think of parts of two oaths that individuals make in other fields of study that overlap yours in terms of the power literally - they put into the hands of those who study them: One is the oath that students of martial arts take in their classes: that they will limit their newly learned skills to the mat except in self defense, and never use those skills to willfully hurt another.

The other originates in the Hippocratic Oath that doctors take. The actual words, in about the second paragraph are, "I will keep them from harm and injustice. . . ." but we often hear those words paraphrased "First, do no harm. . . ."

What does this mean for the individual with great intellectual ability? Basically I see you as having three great responsibilities, the fulfillment of which you owe to the world, the neglect of which will ultimately destroy your own happiness, as well as others, and the responsibility you owe yourself to find the area of pursuit that you truly love and follow it.

1. First, do no harm. It's hard to imagine anyone in this group not following this rule. It means don't recklessly hurt other creatures (including human beings), for your own amusement or self aggrandizement. Sometimes we have no moral route except one that causes pain. I agonize over students' grades, for instance. Especially students like you, where sometimes even a B seems like the end of the world. I have to consider the student who worked harder, who stayed on task more faithfully, and actually earned the A; and I must also consider the student who worked hard and faithfully, but the clear and brilliant understanding came a little more clearly and a little more brilliantly than to another whose work was just as demanding. So "A"s cannot be given away fairly. And words have come out of my mouth that I never dreamed were cruel until I listened to them as they hung in the air. But the cruelties I'm thinking of are the cruelties we practice unthinkingly *because we can*. The cruelty of the INs toward the OUTs. The cruelty of big people towards little people. The clever, witty, teasing remark with that razor sharp bite of truth or the put-down which a gifted student can do so much more devastatingly than anyone else and which always gets a laugh at someone else's expense.

It also means that we don't turn our back on pain when we see it in other creatures or in our fellow man.

2. The second responsibility you have is to respect and care for all your fellow men, not just those who are smart, like you. We have probably all had to deal with the medical specialist who has no time to listen, or discuss treatment with his worried patient; the lawyer who ridicules his culturally diverse clients behind their backs, the businessman who loses his temper at the hourly wage earner who is trying to help him but "wasting my time." None of us will ever be important enough to justify lack of compassion toward those whom life did not bless as you are blessed. Regardless of whether we are "people oriented" or not, everyone deserves respectful communication.

3. Leave the world better than you found it. It's humbling to realize that all the great advances in the condition of man were products of the minds of a few. We don't know the names of most of those few, but we can extrapolate from those we do know about that some were great leaders whose followers eagerly embraced their offerings, and some were toilers in back rooms who humbly brought forth inventions and philosophies which were to be promoted and disseminated by others. But all were remarkably talented folk.

Is the world a better place than it was, say 5000 years ago? Is it a good thing that human beings have become the dominant species, sometimes at great cost to other phyla? Is the improvement of health care worth the danger of over-population? Does man still commit horrible acts upon his fellow man in places like Rwanda and Bosnia? Hitler and Stalin were manifestations of my lifetime, even though not, thank God, of yours. Was an ancient Arcadian world of long ago better? Did it exist at all?

Not all of the world has been reformed or improved, and some places, are no doubt worse off. Still, unless people like you are committed to the hope and ideal that we can be better, and make the world better, there is no hope at all for mankind. So there is the homework for all your tomorrows.

Your presence here is a tribute to all your teachers and professors and parents who cared enough to get you to this point. The debt you owe is not to them, but to the future, and to yourselves.

Which reminds me, there is one more responsibility - a fourth one, if you will - that I hope you will pursue: find a life's work that you love, and follow it passionately, and your life will bring you joy beyond rubies.

Thank you.

DIANE D. GRYBEK SUPERVISOR

SECONDARY PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOLS, FLORIDA

E. M. FORSTER (1879-1970) AND THE STUDY OF VALUES

BY MICHAEL E. WALTERS NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"Liberty, he argues, is connected with prose, and bureaucrats who want to destroy liberty tend to write and speak badly, and to use pompous or wooly or portmanteau phrases in which their true meaning or any meaning disappears." Two Cheers For Democracy (1951) by E. M. Forster. Harcourt Brace, p. 74.

The major concept being expressed in the American political arena lately is concerned with "values." On the Republican side we hear about "family values" and on the Democratic side we hear about "caring values." The issue of values is going to be crucial in the 1996 presidential election, as well as for Congressional and local politics. The sensibility of the gifted can help us to understand this debate. Thomas Jefferson was an advocate of public education because he believed that an electorate that has been trained to think beyond propaganda is important to the survival of democracy.

The British writer, E. M. Forster, was concerned with both democracy and human values. His sensibility in all of his novels emphasized the discovery and expression of human values. The conflicts in Forster's novels are related to class, racial and national-tribal matters, and his protagonists are even in conflict with their own sense of personal values. In Where Angels Fear To Tread (1905) and A Room With A View (1908), the main characters are British upper class individuals who come to Italy to partake of its art and music. At the same time, they have a sense of cultural superiority over the Italians, especially the working classes and peasants. Also, there are sharp class distinctions between these British expatriates. In A Room With A View, one of the main characters (George Emerson) is criticized because his family connections are with the middle class management of the railways instead of the landed gentry. "This Miss Bartlett had asked Mr. George Emerson what his profession was, and he answered the railway. She was very sorry she had asked him. She had no idea it would be such a dreadful answer, or she would not have asked him." (p. 82).

Multiculturalism is one prevailing concept being extolled today, especially in public education. In his 1924 novel, A Passage To India, Forster captured the need for multiculturalism and respect for cultural diversity. This novel describes the lack of appreciation for different cultures and the total lack of social contact between the imperial bureaucracy and the native people. He also captured the need for positive contact between the Hindus and Moslems, and showed the explosive and destructive consequences of cultural isolation. "I believe in teaching people to be individuals, and to understand other individuals. It's the only thing I do believe in." (A Passage To India, p. 127).

During World War II, Forster served his country through radio broadcasts where he read his essays that described and inspired listeners in the values of British democracy. These broadcasts were also beamed to Nazi occupied Europe. He believed it was crucial for the war effort to define what the allies were collectively fighting and dying for. The essays were brought together in a collection named Two Cheers For Democracy (1951). One of them is an example of great expository writing, "What I Believe In." Forster perceived that the allies were fighting for the integrity of human relations and the survival of the human spirit. "What is good in people -- and consequently in the world -- is their insistence on creation, their belief in friendship and loyalty for their own sakes." (p. 73). He described humanism as being the characteristics of curiosity, a free mind, belief in good taste, and belief in the survival of the human race. Forster's mentors were Montaigne and Erasmus. For the elections of 1996, E. M. Forster can be a mentor for gifted students by helping them to understand the basic meanings of democratic and social values.

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DURING A VISIT TO ENGLAND in the spring of 1996, I observed many examples of a nation devoted to nurturing the gifted and talented. First, there was the national competition for the best young classical musician -- the finalists' performance was broadcast for several hours on BBC television where each of five individuals played a concerto. For approximately five hours, my family and I viewed live performances by these teenagers -- on a violin, trombone, percussion, bassoon or piano. The winner was a young violinist who studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School of Music. It was impressive to see these lengthy competitions on British national television being broadcast from a beautiful and full auditorium in Birmingham, England. The second display of giftedness occurred while visiting Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace and childhood home of William Shakespeare. Besides having the opportunity to walk through the home of his early childhood and youth and to see many Elizabethan artifacts in the Shakespeare Museum, I observed an amazing variety of people who traveled to Stratford to learn about the Bard's early life. An international conglomeration was touring this town on a cold and windy March day, e.g., a group of Asian school girls, Americans from Minnesota and Virginia, British families, and students from France, Germany and Eastern Europe.

One of the museum displays was particularly interesting from an educator's perspective -- an old school desk known historically as "Shakespeare's desk." Stratford-upon-Avon was a long distance from London during Elizabethan times. His imagination grew in a small farming community under the tutelage of scholars who traveled from Oxford University to teach school children Latin, Greek, and English grammar and history. What unique factors in this environment helped to nurture his creative genius? Are similar factors present in 20th century Western society? Such questions were sparked by my visit to this landmark of creative genius.

These experiences show that Britain strongly encourages the development and preservation of giftedness and talent. As the article by Jeanne Purcell and Joseph Renzulli demonstrates, it is necessary to design mentoring programs in the United States that support talent development in the humanities, the arts and the sciences. Their article discusses the rationale for the UConn Mentor Connection summer program based on mentoring research. This issue also includes: (1) a statement by Dr. James Gallagher and the National Association for Gifted Children on nurturing affective needs; (2) an inspiring creed by Ross Butchart which should be used by teachers of the gifted to affirm the importance of their work; (3) an article by Karen Cogan supporting the practice of ability grouping; and (4) Michael Walters' essay on the life and times of Richard Rodriguez, a gifted Hispanic scholar who refuses to be placed into affirmative action or bilingual categories. IIII IIII

Maurice Fisher, Publisher

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE-TO-ONE: UCONN MENTOR CONNECTION

JEANNE H. PURCELL
JOSEPH S. RENZULLI
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

"I am absolutely certain there is nothing any of us can do that is of greater importance than mentoring for helping our youngsters develop to the fullest of their abilities." John Pepper Proctor and Gamble

Emily

Emily, a freshman in high school, was tall, blonde, vivacious, well-liked, and unusual. She was mature for her fourteen years and spent a great deal of time with her teachers talking about contemporary issues such as the role of government, capital punishment, women's rights, and the environment. While she was conversant about many adult topics, she was most knowledgeable about human rights and spoke articulately about the plight of Black South Africans.

During her freshman year Emily took world history. Not surprisingly, she was far ahead of her peers with respect to the reading and her understanding of the interrelationships among human civilizations. In her sophomore year, she took Mid-East and African history. During her tenth-grade year she worked closely with her history teacher and organized one lecture about contemporary South Africa and a series of presentations on the impact of nuclear armament. Emily organized these schoolwide presentations with poise, attention to detail, and a great sense of expectation.

Continuing with her interest in social affairs and government, Emily applied for and was accepted as a Legislative Page in the US House of Representatives for Connecticut Congresswoman Barbara B. Kennelly. Emily spent the fall and winter researching government issues, working with Representative Kennelly and her staff, and attending special classes for the high school students who were Legislative and Senate Pages. In Page School, Emily covered US History in depth. Additionally, all pages attended weekly seminars in which they were briefed on significant national and international issues.

Emily returned to her home high school for the second half of her junior year. Not surprisingly, she found school dull compared to the excitement of the "real world of politics." She also dreaded having to take the second half of US History, because she knew she had mastered much of the content prior to and during her experiences in Washington, DC.

Most educators would agree that Emily required an alternative program of studies. Cognitively and developmentally, she had moved beyond the second half of US History required of all juniors and, in all likelihood, Senior Seminars as well. Senior Seminar was a high-level history course offered in Emily's high school in which participants were expected to research national and international issues in order to discuss them with their teacher and members of the class.

What other educational alternatives would have been appropriate for Emily? One advisable instructional alternative was a mentorship, one of the oldest strategies we know dating back to the days of Socrates and Plato. This model of instruction has been revised in recent years to describe individualized instruction outside the home and classroom. What is a mentorship? What have we learned about talent development? How do mentorships contribute to the talent development process? How might this instructional format be used to help Emily? Do mentorship programs exist to help students like Emily? These questions will be used to guide the remainder of this article.

What is a mentorship?

As a form of instruction, mentorship can refer to a range of specific programs. Some educators define the mentorship as a finite, independent study (Mattson, 1979) which results "from the congregating of individuals with like minds and interests" (p. 34). Others align the mentorship with internships, apprenticeships, tutoring arrangements, or other cooperative relationships between schools and local individuals that are designed to expose young people to new careers, skills, or other very specific tasks. Still others characterize mentorships as avenues for "experiential learning" (Ellingson, Haeger, & Feldhusen, 1986).

Some experts and practitioners define mentorships not so much by the activities that constitute them, but by the special relationship that emerges from the learning partnership. Mentorships, Boston (1979) argues, are not programs that simply allow a student to spend time under the direction of someone who has expert knowledge about a field. A mentorship is based upon a commitment between

a mentor and protégé and has, as its purpose, the shaping of a young person's outlook on life (Boston, 1979). Torrance (1979) captures the importance of the relationship that evolves between mentor and novice: "It [Creativity] requires intense devotion. One must be in love with something. It requires constant practice of even very simple operations over a long period of time. It requires concentration and absorption to the exclusion of other things. Generally, it involves an intensive, long-term, one-to-one relationship to a 'sensei' (teacher). Above all, it requires persistence--hard work, self-discipline, diligence, energy, effort, competence, expertness." (p. ix)

We do not intend to argue for a singular definition of the learning partnerships discussed above; clearly, these learning partnerships exist in a number of contexts, are initiated for a range of purposes, and produce a variety of products. It is more beneficial to view these learning relationships as equally valuable learning opportunities that are appropriate for certain learners, under certain circumstances, and at certain times. Some learning arrangements will be relatively short-lived and have a narrow focus, such as tutoring. Other learning relationships, such as independent study, will last longer because the end product is more complex and involved. A student interested in astrophotography, for example, may need to spend a semester or two learning from a more experienced partner about the night sky, the proper shutter speeds for different types of photographs, film speeds, techniques for developing black and white film, and professional mounting techniques. In other situations, the learning partnership is dedicated not only to the learner's competence in prescribed skills, but also the actualization of his or her creative potential in a field. The mentor is dedicated to helping the protégé realize his or her creative potential in their shared area of interest.

What Have We Learned About Talent Development?

The development of talent is a complex process facilitated by a set of many interrelated factors. Experts and researchers are taking a renewed interest in the process of talent development and, most recently, editors of *Roeper Review* devoted an entire issue to the topic. What do we know about talent development?

1. *Talent occurs in every cultural, social, and economic group* (Frasier & Passow, 1994; Frasier, Garcia, & Passow, 1995; Frasier, Hunsaker, Lee, Mitchell, Cramond, Krisel, Garcia, Martin, Frank, & Finley, 1995). Recent research emphasizes core attributes of talent potential, and these attributes can be used by educators to identify more effectively talent in young people from diverse populations.

2. *Talent development takes time* (Csikzentmihalyi & Robinson, 1986; Lehman, 1953). Quite simply, it takes time, sometimes the life span, for young people to become accomplished in a field and domain. Considerable research in a variety of academic, artistic, athletic, scientific, and other fields suggest that world-class performance demands intensely specialized efforts for as much as 70 hours per week for a decade (Walberg, 1983).

3. *Talent develops incrementally* (Arnold & Subotnik, 1995; Bloom, 1985, Feldman, 1991; Gardner, 1993). Regardless of the field of endeavor, the passage from novice to expert is characterized by several phases: the initial stage in which the novice is introduced to a field; training, the intensive middle ground characterized by hours of devoted, disciplined learning and practice of the skills of a field; and mastery, the final stage in which the protégé is able to actualize his or her creativity in a field of endeavor. Although all phases are essential, some experts claim that the middle stage or the apprenticeship is crucial (Feldman, 1991). The middle phase usually occurs in adolescence, and during this time "the spark is ignited," (Feldman, 1991, p. 81) and the student learns to sustain motivation.

4. *Talent development requires some inborn aptitudes, learned skills, and habits of mind* (Berger, 1994; Bloom, 1985; Csikzentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993; Feldhusen, 1995; Feldman, 1991; Gagné, 1995; Gardner, 1993; Simonton, 1984; Zuckerman, 1983). Initially, all young children exhibit some natural abilities which appear more or less spontaneously without clear training or practice. Some young people devote countless hours to learning and practicing their natural abilities which results in systematically developed skills in mathematics, painting, photography, writing, skating, and the like. Finally, talent development is the result of particular habits of mind, such as finding pleasure in solitude, the ability to tolerate frustration and negative moods, curiosity, commitment to goals, initiative, task commitment, and creativity.

5. *Talent development requires prodigious support from various sectors of the environment, including the family and school.* Parents create positive home environments that support genuine interests, and model achievement orientation. Additionally, family members play key roles in locating, changing, organizing, and raising money to pay for teachers for young people at each stage in the incremental talent development process (Bloom, 1985; Gardner, 1993). Schools, too, support talent development by supplying a wide range of challenging learning opportunities (Feldhusen, 1995; Renzulli, 1994); providing teachers who are supportive, interested in their students, and who model enjoyment and involvement in their field; and locating

mentors who exhibit the characteristics and behaviors of experts in the targeted field of endeavor.

6. *Talent development requires optimal experiences and "furtherance"* (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Csikzentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993; Pressey, 1955). Quite simply, the quality of a young person's experiences facilitate engagement. Csikzentmihalyi (1990) characterized peak moments as times when attention is invested in realistic goals, and when skills match opportunities for growth and action. Those engaged with tasks say that they feel "strong, excited, unself-conscious, intrinsically motivated, successful, and as if they were working toward long-term goals (Csikzentmihalyi, 1993, p. 253). In addition to optimal experiences, talent development requires "furtherance" (Pressey, 1955). According to Pressey, much admired successes make subsequent attempts more likely, more vigorous, better integrated, and build ability. To summarize, talent development requires not only particular kinds of experiences that motivate protégés to recapture the same intensity of experiences felt before, but also successions of these positive experiences to increase the likelihood of subsequent attempts and effort and further develop abilities.

Mentorship: An Essential Key to Optimal Talent Development

How do mentorships contribute to the talent development process? Research suggests that mentorships provide students with a wide variety of benefits, academic and social, that are critical to talent development (Arnold & Subotnik, 1995; Berger, 1994; Bloom, 1985; Csikszentimalyhi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993; Feldman, 1991; Gardner, 1993; Goertzel, Goertzel, & Goertzel, 1978; Kerr, 1985; Piirto, 1992; Torrance, 1983). Boston (1976) argues that mentorships provide students with opportunities to develop skills and gain competencies. The knowledge and skills that are learned in mentorships will be required later on as novices continue in their chosen field.

Cox and Daniel (1983) document a range of personal benefits in the exemplary mentorship programs they examined. Some student participants gained a deeper understanding of the connection between school and work. Other participants gained confidence and maturity after working in the real world. A large number of students reported they were better able to envision their future. Some indicated that their mentors "opened doors" for them later on when they applied to colleges and universities. Kauffman (1981) studied Presidential Scholars to determine the nature, role, and influence of these high-achieving students' most significant mentors. Respondents indicated that their significant mentors supported and encouraged them and provided them with role models. Students had the opportunity to observe their mentor plan, make decisions, speak with and persuade others on a daily basis. Mentorships provide protégés with opportunities to learn the behaviors and habits of mind that will be critical to their later work and world-class performances or activities.

Harriet Zuckerman (1983) examined the mentor relationships among scientists at the pinnacle of their field. She also emphasized the importance of the relationship between the mentor and mentee. Her research suggests that the protégé's personal learning may be more beneficial than the cognitive training.

One point on which the laureates are largely agreed is that the least important aspect of their apprenticeship was the acquiring of substantive knowledge from the master. Some even reported that in the limited sense of information and knowledge of the scientific literature, apprentices, focused on one or another problem, sometimes "knew more" than their masters....Laureates testify that the principle benefit of apprenticeship was a wider orientation that included standards of work and modes of thought. They report, in effect, that the apprenticeship was a time of what social scientists call socialization. Socialization includes more than what is ordinarily understood by education or training: it involves acquiring the norms and standards, the values and attitudes, as well as the knowledge, skills, and behavior patterns associated with particular statuses and roles. It is, in short, the process through which people are inducted into a subculture. (p. 247)

Accordingly, Zuckerman suggests that mentorships at this level convey the tacit or unspoken knowledge of a field: the ways of problem finding, problem solving, and the values or standards for work.

To summarize, mentorships provide young people with a powerful range of benefits that encourage students through the talent development process. These benefits are not mutually exclusive. Initially, students benefit cognitively because they learn new information and acquire new skills. During the critical formative experiences of the apprenticeship, protégés learn not only additional skills and habits of mind, but also they participate in experiences which may sustain a life time of motivation in a field. Finally, students benefit personally because they learn the norms, standards, values, and attitudes—the tacit knowledge— associated with a profession.

What Can We Do for Emily?

Let us now return to Emily, the young woman whose case opened this discussion. When Emily returned from her Washington, DC, legislative page experience, she was far ahead of her peers with respect to her knowledge about US History, international affairs, and maturity. Her classroom teachers noted that she needed to move beyond the traditional course of studies. With the help of an enrichment specialist, Emily's US History teacher arranged a pretest for her on the second half of US History. Emily scored over 90% on the exam and was excused from the course. A mentorship was arranged for Emily to take the place of coursework that had been eliminated for her with the pretest. One day a week, Emily worked in the Connecticut state capital as an aid to a representative in the state government. For the remainder of the academic year, Emily enthusiastically researched state issues, traced bills, and advised her mentor on critical government concerns. Emily's relationship with her mentor flourished and, in time, he grew to depend upon her insight and organizational skills. He advocated for Emily's admission into a prominent Northeastern university and promised her additional assistance if she ever decided to pursue a career in government.

Are There Mentor Programs?

We know that there are thousands of talented teenagers just like Emily all across America. They have talent and motivation. Yet, they need alternative educational programs to actualize their potential. Mentors play a key role in this stage of the talent development process because they are catalysts who will take young people beyond the schoolhouse door. They can provide them with experiences which literally may change their lives.

Where can high-achieving adolescents locate some of the special services they require to actualize their talents? The University of Connecticut is implementing a new program for highly motivated and talented teenagers called UConn Mentor Connection. It is a three-week, residential, summer program for rising high school juniors and seniors, which will run from July 7-26, 1996. At the heart of the program are mentorships in all areas of the arts and sciences with university professors and graduate students. The program has a single mission: to provide students with opportunities to participate in cutting-edge, creative projects and investigations in students' and mentors' shared areas of interest.

We believe UConn Mentor Connection will provide participating students with experiences in the intensive middle phase in the talent development process. Specifically, participants will become practicing professionals in their preselected field. They will be exposed to the methodology of their targeted area and have the opportunity to systematically practice the prerequisite skills. They will be exposed to leading researchers of their field and learn about tacit knowledge: how researchers find cutting-edge, important problems and questions; how researchers think about and solve problems; and the high work standards required by the field. We hope participants' "spark" will be ignited, and that their successful, formative experiences in UConn Mentor Connection will fuel their motivation to continue in their preselected area and increase the likelihood that someday they will make creative contributions in their chosen field.

Readers who want more information about UConn Mentor Connection may contact the address below.

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www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwgt

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STATEMENT FROM DR. JAMES GALLAGHER TO THE READERS OF *GEPQ*: NAGC's CONCERN FOR THE AFFECTIVE NEEDS OF THE GIFTED

There has been an increasing interest in the emotional development of gifted students and a fresh recognition that advanced intellectual development can carry some special burdens in the affective domain. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has recently released a position paper on the Affective Needs of Gifted Children. This statement recognized that the special characteristics of gifted children can lead to special problems, as follows,

Characteristics such as emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, lofty goals for themselves and others, and deep concerns about societal problems at an early age.

The NAGC urges school systems to provide appropriate affective services such as counseling interventions and career development and guidance programs to allow such children to reach their full potential.

Jim Gallagher, NAGC Past President

NAGC POSITION PAPER
AFFECTIVE NEEDS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) periodically issues policy statements that deal with issues, policies, and practices that have an impact on the education of gifted and talented students. Policy statements represent the official convictions of the organization.

All policy statements approved by the NAGC Board of Directors are consistent with the organization's belief that education in a democracy must respect the uniqueness of all individuals, the broad range of cultural diversity present in our society, and the similarities and differences in learning characteristics that can be found within any group of students. NAGC is fully committed to national goals that advocate both excellence and equity for all students, and we believe that the best way to achieve these is through differentiated educational opportunities, resources, and encouragement for all students.

Educational and counseling programs must provide all children with opportunities to develop understanding of themselves and their role in society. Because, by definition, gifted children differ significantly from others, these programs should be responding to the social-emotional or affective characteristics that distinguish gifted students from others. Furthermore, since significant differences also exist within the gifted population, appropriate services need to be designed and implemented to respond to individual differences.

Characteristics such as emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, lofty goals and standards for themselves and others, and deep concerns about societal problems at an early age are found in a proportionally higher incidence among gifted and talented children. Those who have disabilities or differ in other ways, including culturally, linguistically, or socioeconomically may have additional affective needs.

NAGC believes that gifted children also require appropriate affective services including gifted-focused counseling interventions and career-development guidance programs if they are to develop their potential. NAGC recommends that these services be designed to:

- Provide orientation to gifted programming, including information about the selection process and the social, emotional, and academic implications of giftedness
- Enhance relationships with others, including both those who are identified as gifted and those who are not
- Assist with long-term life planning, including opportunities to deal with issues related to multi-potentiality
- Provide counseling that addresses the increased incidence of perfectionism, unrealistic goals, emotional intensity, moral concerns, and the resultant stress and lower achievement in the gifted population

Some gifted and talented children, because of heightened intellectual and social-emotional needs, may experience difficulties that require professional intervention. NAGC believes that it is imperative that those who provide services at such times have expertise in understanding the impact of giftedness on a child's development.

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AN EDUCATOR'S CREED BY ROSS BUTCHART VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

For several years following my first year teaching I pursued what I thought was the path to educational excellence. I spent my summer months thoroughly going over and revising one curriculum program. Sort of separated the grain from the chaff. Eliminated a few worthless lessons or assignments, revised others, even generated totally new ideas. Finally got to where I felt I could create my own Mathematics textbook or Literature anthology to match the best commercial products on the market. Fact is, things were humming along quite smoothly, thank you.

Then it happened - the day came that I read THE REPORT! Don't even remember where it originated, but the sad statistic it stated was one I could not ignore. Forty-four percent of all new teachers leave the profession within the first five years!

A sordid reality when you stop to think about it. A tragic commentary about the priorities of our society. Nine out of every twenty new teachers find the challenge of guiding, motivating, and instructing the next generation of young adults to successful academic accomplishment so dispiriting that they opt out. Simply chuck it all. Walk away from five years of university-level career preparation. And for what? A McWorker level of enterprise? Suddenly my petty summer enterprise seemed insignificant. Even trivial....

The effect of this realization was not a matter of conscious choice. It was a matter of compulsion. I simply had to revise my focus. And because enthusiastic young talent is just too precious to lose, a new perception did become evident. One that confirmed what I really knew in my heart all along. That there is indeed quite a bit more to teaching than simply preparing lessons, projects, assignments, and their related activities. Little things really - but basic to anyone's self-respect. Things like satisfaction. Being appreciated. Enjoying respect. A belief that you're making a difference.

So I shifted direction. Made a one hundred eighty degree swing. Gave up curriculum renovations for something more meaningful and turned my efforts toward constructing a personal credo of teaching. Sort of the Gospel of Education according to Butchart. Advice I would share with any young teacher frustrated to the point of quitting. Now, many more years and many revisions later, I finally have something to offer - and this is it:

As a teacher you have it within your power to influence eternity. For never forget that the greatest from the past were teachers. And if the world is a wiser place today it came not through the laws of kings or the victories of generals, but from teachers who had insight into a superior way to inspire greatness in others and conveyed their vision to those who enacted individual dreams to fulfill private destinies. Believe the truth. You have the indomitable spirit within to affect generation upon generation. I can but guide you through a set of personal beliefs, to a faith in your own talents as the way to discover your innate power.

These brief insights are not unique; nor do they derive from one of superior intellect. Their benefits have been know and articulated for generations. Indeed, their longevity is proof of their value. My advice is to read them daily, once before you begin your work and again at the end of your labours. Then let the wisdom they convey become the foundation of your convictions.

Credo #1 Each new day offers a fresh vision of tomorrow's possibilities.

Your daily reacquaintance with each student is a glimpse into the soul of the future. And how you undertake the challenges each day presents, both by attitude and by action, determines the measure of your influence upon that future. Your options are limited, but straightforward. For in the today named 'opportunity' lives the tomorrow named 'hope,' but in the today named 'maybe' lives the tomorrow named 'never'

Credo #2 A deep and abiding respect for others begins with a deep and abiding respect for yourself.

The renowned French author Francois Rabelais knew well and stated eloquently over four decades ago: "So much is a man worth as he esteems himself." To successfully confront any challenge, you must first admire what you see in the mirror each morning. And in you there is much to admire.

Your reflected image encompasses the sum total of your knowledge, your feelings, and your experiences - the very essence of your uniqueness. Yet there is more. For within what you are today also resides the sum total of your future potential. And both in what you are, and in what you may become lie your power to influence students to realize their

individual capability for greatness.

You must admire without reservation what you see in the mirror. For there is much that you are. But you must also admire what you see beyond the mirror. For there is much more that you may become.

Credo #3 Seek to discover the essential goodness in each student

Never forget that every inhabitant of our planetary home was conceived through an act of love, and though the current circumstances of many may lie more in misery and misfortune, the spirit from their conception resides dormant in each. Yes, there are students who have few endearing qualities to mark them as civilized members of the human condition. Yet even within their anger and hatred there exists an energy that can be transmuted into a purpose for their betterment.

For every person harbours within a dual image of his worth. The one is the vision of himself in all his perfection and in full realization of his ideals. The other is the vision of himself with all his faults and in full display of his weaknesses. In the distance between these two images lies his perception of his worth. The power and purpose of the transmuted energy within each can be engaged to reduce this separation. To effect its occurrence is the creative challenge of teaching.

Credo #4 Time is the great equalizer.

Time knows no nationality, race, or religion. Regardless of one's occupation, income, or social status, it regards all with dispassion. It is the paragon of equal opportunity, giving 24 hours a day, 168 hours a week, 8736 hours a year as the dimensions of our existence.

But what you decide to do with this time is your choice alone.

Never forget, though, that time is the currency of exchange by which to measure your sincerity for others. And to give freely of your time beyond the boundaries of established expectation for the benefit of your students is its supreme expression. An anonymous writer once recorded: *There's no traffic jam on the extra mile.* Neither is there a short-cut to the on-ramp.

Credo #5 Let students learn what you live.

How you teach is a measure of your professionalism. But how you live is a measure of your character. Without doubt both are important, but long after students have forgotten how you taught addition of fractions or the history of 20th century Europe, they will remember you for your consideration, patience, sensitivity, dedication, and humour. Knowledge is temporary. It has its sunrise, its day in the sun, and its sunset; only to be replaced in time by the dawning of further discovery. But principles which ennoble human conduct endure forever.

Credo #6 Every success is a bridge to a greater challenge; every challenge is an opportunity for a greater success.

No curriculum is an end in itself, only a means to a higher end. And while content, processes, and skills possess value, they exist not for their own sake alone. Their transcendent value exists only in how well they may serve as stepping stones which allow students to develop those attitudes which prevent them from imposing artificial limits on their unlimited capacity for success.

Self-respect, empathy, effective time management, dedication to duty, hope for the future - they are all part of the above. Deny their influence and you deny principles which have served and inspired generations. Accept their strength and you have the potential to influence eternity. For should you inspire only one in ten of those you teach; and should they in turn affect but one in ten of those they encounter; and should they in turn also touch but one in ten, and thereby pass the torch of inspiration throughout all future generations; then your influence will truly extend unto eternity.

This I know. I keep one special file folder in my cabinet. It contains only four letters. Each was personally handwritten by a student I have taught and conveys a very simple message: THANK YOU, YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE.

Considering the greatest teacher in the world had only one in ten return to express appreciation, four of the seventeen hundred I have taught over twenty-eight years is an honour. ☆☆☆☆☆☆ ☆☆☆☆☆☆

"Great ideas come into the world as quietly as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear among the uproar of empires and nations a faint fluttering of wings, the gentle stirrings of life and hope. -- Albert Camus

ABILITY GROUPING: AID OR DISCRIMINATION

BY KAREN COGAN FARMINGTON, NEW MEXICO

As a kindergarten teacher, I soon learned that, within my group of students, there were many levels of academic ability. Some of the children already knew letters and sounds and were beginning to read. Others were just learning to recognize letters. And a few of the children couldn't tell me their names or basic shapes and colors.

Stumped by these vast differences, I felt the only way to keep from boring some or losing others was to divide the class into flexible groups. After having studied the pros and cons of grouping, I proceeded with some initial misgivings. These misgivings were fed by literature that suggested such grouping would devastate the self-esteem of the less academically advanced children.

Worried this might be the case, I could, however, see no other solution. To my relief, I found the opposite to be true. Ability grouping actually gave these children more confidence. Finding they were now often the smartest in their groups, these children were relieved not to compete with the children who always knew the answers.

Not only did this grouping benefit less confident learners, it helped children at every level of learning. Dividing the children according to their academic needs allowed me to zero in on the exact curriculum level of each group and teach only the skills that were needed.

Another plus to this system was that I now had the freedom to challenge my most academically gifted students. Too often, these children are allowed to become lazy, sitting idly by while others complete work they have long since finished. As I moved this group ahead, offering them more advanced material, they discovered a need to exert themselves to keep up with the work and compete with other bright students. This is a challenge on which they often thrive.

Since these children are able to work very independently once I got them started, they quickly became absorbed in their task, guiding each other, and asking for very little direction. Behavior problems which had surfaced when these children were bored, quickly vanished as they lost themselves in the excitement of learning.

From the above argument, it follows that homogenous grouping is the perfect alternative to heterogenous grouping, where children sit, staring glassy-eyed into space, while they listen to struggling classmates read aloud. Why, then, doesn't every school offer flexible homogenous grouping?

As the years have passed and I have dealt with sending my own children through schools, I have found there are several myths that prevent public school systems from adopting academic levels which would better meet the needs of all students and eliminate the negative social pressure placed on honor students. These myths are presented and examined below.

Myth 1: The brightest students will manage to learn no matter what the environment. In the currently popular, but often misused, outcome based curriculums, the bright students are often used as mini-teachers and encouraged to help the other students. There's nothing wrong with peer tutoring. However, if the student who is teaching is being held back until the others catch up, not only do they become bored, they are denied the chance to realize their academic potential. As they wait, they become bored and frustrated by the constant drag of a slow pace.

I became aware of that fact when my daughter entered first grade in a system that didn't group until third grade. As we sought relief for her boredom, the principal assured me there were studies which proved with equal conviction the case for and against ability grouping. Yet personal experience and common sense told me otherwise.

My daughter and the other children who were ahead were left to vegetate. The teacher, busy with the children who were behind and likely to score poorly on the standardized tests, was unable to find time to challenge the children who had mastered much of the first grade work before they entered the classroom. That small group of children could have been taken far ahead into new and challenging material. Since there was no grouping and the teacher had human limitations, these children learned nothing new in first grade. It seems a waste for a country which wishes to compete with the rest of the world, to hold back some of our brightest minds from learning.

Myth 2: The self-esteem of slower children is hurt when

they are grouped. Even young children need to be given credit for a certain amount of perception. It is the nature of a child to compare. They know who is the best runner, who is the best at catching a ball, and who is best at spelling and reading. Whether we group or not, children will know who is successful academically. Whether we group formally or allow the children to do it mentally, children will group themselves, often with disastrous results as seen in:

Myth 3: It is better for children's social adjustment not to group. It is worse on self-esteem when there is too great a diversion in a single classroom because it allows more comparison. When children within a single class face a gulf in academic ability, the tendency is to pull the best students down. Competition within widely mismatched groups causes resentment, teasing and negative academic pressure. Insecure, the children not at the academic top, make it seem "cool" not to make good grades. Without the support of peers who thrive on competition and value academic achievement, many bright children give in to pressure and try not to be too smart. In addition, many give in to demands to give answers and cheat in order to have friends.

In the misguided excuse of preserving self-esteem, many of our children, either struggle or vegetate each day in American classrooms. This is unfortunate. These classrooms are failing to prepare children for adult life.

When students go out into the world, they will face employers who are concerned with good job performance. And employers rarely put hurting someone's self-esteem above ability when looking for able employees. The students they hire will be expected to have mastered basic skills for the job they seek. And these students will compete with other graduates who have mastered the academic skills which qualify them for the position they seek.

If we do not prepare students for the reality of adult life and the competition involved, we have failed them. If they have been left behind because they were "too slow" or neglected because they already knew the material, another graduate who is more prepared will surely get the job.

And lest we see grouping as a form of discrimination instead of a way to meet varied needs, it is ironic to note how many school systems allow discrimination based on athletic ability, yet quake at the thought of grouping children for academics. Why is it all right for coaches to choose only the best players for a football team, thus risking the esteem of the rest of the other children, and yet, not okay for the same school system to offer special programs for honors students based on academic ability? If children's self-esteem can survive sports discrimination, why not academic? After all, not everyone can be good at everything. It is unfortunate, however, that parents and educators sometimes place more emphasis on sports than academics.

As a country, we must wake up and face the myths. America has lost ground in the race to produce the best minds because of our misplaced preoccupation with self-esteem and our love affair with sports. We should insist on true outcome based education. The outcomes should not be measured in liberal social values, but on mastery of academic skills which are challenging to each child.

And the most efficient way to educate masses of children who differ widely in academic ability is to offer flexible grouping. No matter which group a child may fit into, he will find competition which is not out of reach of his ability. This is especially important for the academically able. When high academic achievers are grouped together, they challenge each other and find support in their common desire for success. Like fine athletes, this competition encourages them to keep on their toes and do their best. And though our absorption with self-esteem has given academic competition a bad name, it is no more wrong than competition in sports.

Our public schools were created with one purpose in mind: to educate our children. In keeping with our American tradition of excellence, let's insist all children receive the best education they are capable of receiving. ☞☞☞☞☞

"In most of the fields where facts are sufficient, we have been getting on very well. We know just how to build bridges, make aircraft fly faster, and bombs more destructive. But we don't agree at all on the question of just who, if anybody, ought to be blown up by them. More facts are not going to settle that or any other 'ought' question. And it seems to be the ought questions which are causing a great deal of trouble. Unless we agree upon some of them pretty soon, there may not be much left to argue over or, for that matter, many people to argue. Even a wrong answer, if only there were general agreement upon it, might have less catastrophic results than violent disagreement."

– Joseph Wood Krutch If You Don't Mind My Saying So: Essays on Man & Nature, 1964.

RICHARD RODRIGUEZ: THE STRUGGLES OF A GIFTED MINORITY STUDENT

BY MICHAEL E. WALTERS NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"Intimacy is not created by a particular language; it is created by intimates." from **Hunger of Memory**, p. 32.

In college courses throughout the United States, an autobiography by a Mexican American writer, Richard Rodriguez, is required reading. His book is used for provoking thinking and discussion on such intensive topics as multiculturalism, cultural hegemony, affirmative action and bilingualism. However, **Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez** (1982, Bantam Books), possesses special insights for those in the gifted education field. The concerns that gifted educators share with Rodriguez are twofold: First, he pointedly represents the dilemma of the gifted minority student. Secondly, his book is the result of giftedness as expressed by the psychological aspects of sensibility.

The term "minority student" is not a numerical status but a term concerned with political power. It is obvious that if one takes women, Latinos, and African-, Asian- and Native-Americans from a state such as California, this collective numerical mass represents a majority. Despite their numerical majority, they are perceived as being in the minority compared to the power elite of California and the nation. Therefore, at least at the present time, "minority student" is a cultural and political description. Richard Rodriguez, contrary to his own political perceptions, fell into this concept of "minority student," especially as it is defined by federal bureaucracies. His book is a testament to one person's struggle for his own sense of self. He is perhaps in his own way seeking to become a self-actualized person according to Maslow's theory, and he demands the freedom to define himself on his own terms. Rodriguez desires most of all, the right to perceive himself based on sensibility rather than ethnicity.

Rodriguez's sensibility derives from his giftedness. He describes how he discovered an exalted universe of literature in his childhood and teens. His ultimate conflict concerns the status of language. What has been described in today's political atmosphere as cultural assimilation, is to Rodriguez, the desire to transcend his family's language, and to communicate and live in the universal language of human thought. For him, language does not define a sociological context or a political condition. He considers this use of language to be on a totalitarian level of human response. Language for him is found in the human need for personal meaning, and the religious and aesthetic aspects of the human condition. His painful desire throughout his education was to express himself as a gifted minority student whose values were determined by individual sensibility -- not the nostrums of political correctness.

Rodriguez's love for literature displayed itself during his early years. He read and wrote constantly -- Dante, Shakespeare and Dickens had a more compelling message than a specific political agenda. What is important is not that Rodriguez's views are politically incorrect, but that his views derive from the understanding of a gifted individual. For example, his feeling for religion is a more relevant concern than his ethnicity. The French Catholic existential theologian, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), and the Jewish existential philosopher, Martin Buber (1878-1965), are individuals who speak his language.

Language for Rodriguez should not encourage individuals to live in a tribal tent but to become citizens of the world. For example, he identifies with the British writer, D.H. Lawrence, who had a conflict with his working class father. A good companion book to read with **Hunger of Memory** is **Sons and Lovers** (1913) by D.H. Lawrence. ☛☛☛

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The spirit of the 1996 Olympics was on full display in Atlanta, Georgia this summer when thousands of champions from 197 countries joined forces with hundreds of music and dance performers for the opening ceremonies. This astonishing display in honor of youthful competitors from every nation invites comparison with intellectually and artistically advanced students. Are there characteristics which underlie the Olympians' emphasis on excellence in sports that can be applied to educating gifted youth? In the spirit of these extraordinary athletic games, we recommend that supporters of gifted education make their own personal analysis of the success experienced by Olympic athletes. At least seven features underlie their success that should be applied to developing more support for gifted education: (1) emphasis on grass roots community support by ordinary citizens; (2) high levels of motivation and enthusiasm among athletes and fans; (3) systematic training programs at the community, state, national and international levels; (4) extensive recognition and rewards given to outstanding athletes; (5) equal opportunity for competition resulting in the selection of women and minorities with superior athletic abilities; (6) large budgets available for training and the display of athletic abilities; and (7) cooperation among athletic, business and government organizations to promote the Olympic events.

The interest and support of ordinary citizens/taxpayers is the primary driving force that sustains excellence in sports. In the United States and all nations of the world, the enthusiasm generated by Jackie Joyner-Kersee, Dream Team III and Kip Keino (1,500 meter run, 1968) spreads to every community and household. We have much to learn about producing this same amount of enthusiasm for identifying and developing gifted children. The seven points described above should be carefully analyzed by every educator concerned with the future of gifted education in their community. Let us emulate the Olympians' emphasis on excellence to gain more citizen support for educating the gifted. The Olympic spirit needs to spread across athletic boundaries to the realm of the intellect. This can occur when we use the lessons learned from the Olympics of ancient Greece and the modern Olympics of 1896-1996.

This issue of *GEPQ* includes articles by British and Canadian authors. Pauline Bottrill is a citizen of the United Kingdom who resides in Bethesda, Maryland. Following in the tradition of the imaginative 19th century English design and crafts expert, William Morris, she writes about design education for gifted students. The second article by Ross Butchart of Vancouver, British Columbia discusses the advantages of using that old standby, the newspaper, to teach social issues and history in a differentiated curriculum. Michael Walters writes about the gifted American author, Ellen Glasgow.

****** ****** *Maurice Fisher, Publisher*

DESIGN EDUCATION ACTIVITY: A CURRICULUM MODEL FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED

BY PAULINE BOTTRILL
INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION BETHESDA, MARYLAND

Introduction

Since working in Fairfax County Virginia, I have noted that some Gifted and Talented Program activities bear a relationship to what I would term design education activity. Teachers in this program develop multiple intelligences and cognitive ability, and involve students in practical, process based multi-disciplinary learning activity. Design education may not be a familiar area to United States educators. But the focus on developing students' creative thinking and learning skills is similar to the objectives of a gifted program. One reason that this area has grown is because the typical compartmentalized curriculum does not reflect real world problems and practices. Designing as an integrative activity draws on knowledge from many subjects as well as knowledge and skills intrinsic to designing.

Design education is an embryonic field of study which has gained some recognition in the United Kingdom in the past decade. A design approach to learning is being developed in some technology education programs in the United States. In England and Wales, the development of design capability is a vital component of the National Curriculum for Technology for all children from 5-16 years (Department for Education, Wales, 1995).

There are some aspects of design education which might be of interest to teachers of the gifted. A knowledge of the structure and evaluation of design education activity could support teachers in their differentiated program.

First, I shall give a synopsis of design theory which has informed the development of design education activity. I shall outline the emergence of design education in the curriculum.

Secondly, I shall characterize designing activity both inside and outside of school. Professional designers are the keys to understanding the nature of design activity in real world situations. They use expert ability to do their job for which they were trained and have learned by experience. In this section, I shall compare the behavior of expert designers with some emergent design thinking in young children based on research.

A major area of concern for developing process-based learning has been the creation of appropriate assessment models. In this regard, I shall present a model for observing children's design thinking. I suggest that teachers might consider the characteristic behavior of expert designers when attempting to monitor student ability.

Background

Design and Designing

The term 'design' and 'designing' when used as a verb is characterized by the intentional and purposeful activity of human beings, with their conception, resolution and realization of future configurations of the made world.

At one end of a spectrum, designing involves a broad field of human response to the physical environment using whatever resources that are available. At the other end, designing embraces fields as diverse as architecture, graphics, communication and media design, fashion industry, engineering, and corporate business. We all have some practical experience of designing in our everyday lives, but designing is also a specialized talent. Some people are more gifted in this area, but the knowledge and skill of design and designing may be taught.

Design Activity versus Design Education Activity

Roberts and Archer (1992, p. 3) make a distinction between design activity and design educational activity:

> *'Design activity, when distinguished from design-educational activity, is directed towards the manipulation of things and systems so as to achieve the most acceptable and practicable fit between a particular set of desires and needs, on the one hand, and a particular means of fulfilling them, on the other.' Design activity, they state: ' is more concerned with the attainment of a result than with the acquisition of knowledge.'*
>
> *'Design educational activity is concerned not only with achieving an effective result, it is also concerned with the development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding. This knowledge and understanding is to do with self, self in relation to made things and systems, and the appreciation of the effect of his or her own, and other people's activity in and on the world.'*

In the examples discussed in this article, the purpose of the design activity is to develop the student's knowledge and skill as well as to achieve an effective result. In terms of

assessment, both the product (or outcomes of the activity) and the process need to be evaluated.

Design as a Basic Intelligence

The idea that designing is a fundamental human intelligence has been founded on the theory that:

- all human beings have a capacity to design;
- designing has its own way of knowing and is as basic as language and number.

Human Capacity

In order to design, human beings need to use several characteristics which Donaldson (1992) describes as making us human. Apart from our ability to use language and develop tools, human beings:

- are highly prolific 'intention generators' setting goals of diverse kinds;
- make choices and can pursue a course of action with tenacity;
- consider novel and purposeful outcomes to their actions;
- are good at thinking of possible future states;
- can consider what is and what might be.

Donaldson adds that: "although we live in a world of hard fact we can imagine the world changed and within limits we know we can change it, - some recognition of possibility is activated when we start to ask questions."

Cognitive Modelling

Our capacity to respond actively and intentionally to the physical environment, to create purposeful outcomes and possible future states, is driven by distinct abilities. A key to this ability is the development of cognitive modelling:

> 'The expression *cognitive modelling* is intended to refer to the basic process by which the human mind construes sense experience to build a coherent conception of external reality and construct further conceptions of memory and imagination. The expression *imaging* is intended to refer to that part of cognitive modelling which construes sense data and constructs representations spatially and presentationally rather than discursively and sequentially.' (Archer, 1992 cited in Bottrill, 1995).

A Third Culture

Archer (1976) believes that: 'there exists a designerly way of thinking and communicating that is different from scientific and scholarly ways of thinking.' Archer suggested that before the demise of the crafts and the dominance of the universities, the 3Rs meant: reading and writing, reckoning and figuring, and wroughting and wrighting. (Wroughting means knowing how things are brought about and wrighting, how to act in order to bring them about.) The change from a craft-based design process to a more conscious theory-based approach to design led to the academic study of design. It is perhaps no accident that a third culture alluded to here is that of technology. A.N. Whitehead (1932) for example suggested that:

> *There are three main roads along which we can proceed with good hope of advancing towards the best balance of intellect and character: these are the way of literary culture, the way of scientific culture and the way of technical culture. No one of these methods can be exclusively followed without the grave loss of intellectual activity and of character.*

The culture of the technology is that of the designer. Technology involves a synthesis of knowledge and skill from both the arts and the sciences. Cross (1982) characterized some of the designerly ways that distinguish the activity of designers from individuals who work in the humanities and sciences.

Design and Technology in the National Curriculum in England and Wales

The movement for recognition of design as a discipline took place in the 1960s (Conference of Design Methods). The history of this movement is reported by Cross (1992). Design education emerged in the early 1960s largely in Britain through identifying the educational potential of, and value of cross-curricular approaches to design, and designing in craft-based subjects. Today design and technology are included in the National Curriculum of Great Britain for all children. The belief is that learning design and technology at school helps young people for living and working in a technological world by: a) technical understanding of design methods and developing skills needed to produce practical solutions to real problems; and b) stimulating both intellectual and creative abilities and developing personal qualities needed to complete design ideas from initial ideas to finished outcomes. Children are not just taught about design and about technology; they are expected to develop design and technology capability.

> *Pupils should be taught to develop their Design and Technology capability by combining their designing*

and making skills with knowledge and understanding to design and make products.
(DES, 1992).

Design Activity

Outside of school, activity closely related to the behavior of designers can be seen in the actions of young children. This example has the ingredients of a design activity:

Context - small boy and his companion playing with a model sailing boat;

Content - the important task for them is launching, relaunching, perfecting and testing the launch;

System as Product - they are designing a system that would work by trimming and testing the sails, adjusting and readjusting the rudder;

Evaluation - the aim is to achieve a perfect launching, to capture the wind and water, meet the objective and haul the yacht on its rollers back up the sand...and start all over again.

There are several processes involved in designing. The main principles of a design activity are exhibited in the boys' actions:

- responding to an identified or perceived need (to control the performance of a model sailing boat);
- creating something which did not previously exist or modifying something (this activity involved modifying a system of launching to achieve a satisfactory solution);
- communicating thoughts and action using models and codes (the boys communicated their thoughts and ideas through words and demonstrative action; the boat is a model, but for the children it represented the real thing)
- attaining an intentional outcome even though it may be ill-defined (can only be determined in this case by the behavior of the boys which was deliberate and purposeful);
- following a coherent and structured course of action which is interactive (the rules of the action were being created by the boys through the course of the action; there was a pattern of trying something out, evaluating it, trying another way - this is the basis of design methodology);
- taking place over time (in this case the subjects were involved for two hours of concentrated action; design processes take place over time);
- being manifested within a system of values (the kinds of values observed were: technical quality, aesthetic judgments and skills; the object was to achieve perfection. Other value systems are ethical, political, moral, economic, cultural and social);
- reaching an outcome was a compromise of the accumulative demands of the activity (each attempt was subject to the elements of wind, water and density of sand, and to human error in adjusting the model);
- justifying the outcome by the results or justifying the results (in this case a result is the perfection of a system that works. One would need to ask the boys who were also the clients whether this worked; perhaps they did capture a perfect solution, then again when they try another day the tides and wind will have changed). (in Bottrill, 1995).

Design Education Activity

Simulating a Design Situation in the Classroom

A teacher will need to simulate a creative opportunity for students in a classroom situation. For example:

Context - classroom environment with the students working individually, in pairs or small groups;

Content - space inside and outside a box presented as a challenge or a problem to be solved;

Product - make a box into something else;

Objective -
- Select a box from those available and discuss the form and the shape;
- Talk about what you could make the box into (use imagination and creative thought) and decide what will be made (purposeful outcome);
- Generate goals by asking questions about what might be, or the process underlying the task;

Evaluation -

- State what has changed;
- Describe what happens on the outside and/or the inside of your box.

Materials - Provide boxes and cartons of varied sizes (one for each child), construction paper, pencils, glue, scissors, crayons, paint, yarn, tape, hole puncher, etc.

Two Gifted and Talented Activities

Some Gifted and Talented activities I have observed exhibit aspects of design educational learning. Two examples from a grade 1 class which illustrate this are:

> The students had been given a large rectangle of black construction paper and Six x Three color squares. The instruction was to use **all the squares to make a pattern** on the black paper. Each student was to spend time arranging and rearranging patterns, then they were to read the sequence verbally to the teachers or the teacher assistant before sticking down the shapes. A note was then attached to the work for the parents saying:
>
> > Today we had a lesson with Mrs. X. . . .and made patterns. Ask me about the patterns I created.

This was a simple design to create a pattern. It is the type of basic activity that a textile designer would do in a design studio. It involves a process, and working toward a goal. There is no right answer. The designer will select the most appropriate solution to meet his or her needs.

The activity was presented to develop knowledge and skill. The purpose of the activity, from the teacher's point of view, was to gain insight into the kinds of thinking skills that these students possessed. The class teacher assisted in recording evidence of thinking through a check list. In this instance, the teacher was especially interested to elicit novel and original responses to the task.

In a second activity in a grade 1 classroom: The students were shown examples of simple machines such as an electric toaster, a pencil sharpener, and a mechanical food whisk. The teacher encouraged them to talk about these objects. The students were able to recall knowledge about these machines from memory and experience. They were asked to think about how the object might function. They were in fact being asked to evaluate a designed product.

All human-made products, systems and environments are to some extent designed by people for their needs and to solve their problems. All the artifacts that the students examined were designed. Knowledge is embedded in all the human-made world. Without design there would be no clothes, books, floors or pavements (Perkins, 1982). In each object the students examined, there is a story about who made it, and why and how it was made. In working on this problem, they had to think about the object and make a value judgment about the objects' technical function, aesthetic appearance, social needs, cultural differences, etc.

The teacher was looking for the level of perceptual awareness. The students were being evaluated through a check list for signs of divergent thinking, risk taking, etc. Some students showed by their comments that they had already acquired considerable knowledge and experience of these machines. Some were hesitant to venture any information while others showed great curiosity and wanted to know: " what if — we tried this or turned that?"

All the students were asked to design a machine that could be used to sow seeds. The purpose of this task was to see if they understood the concept of machines, i.e., a machine is a device created by people to help them and other people. Through this activity the students were developing design awareness and applying design ability to a given task. Having examined the real objects, the students might have been able to identify the design needs or problem for themselves. However, with the constraint on time, full development and evaluation was not possible although this is the area of greatest learning potential.

Professional Designers and What They Do When They Design

Investigations of what designers do when they design have been made by architects and engineers such as Darke (1979), Lawson (1980) and Akin (1984) as a means of making improvements in design procedures in professional practice. Much of the literature in this field was initiated through the debate between science and design methodology, and attempts to construct various forms of design science by Simon (1969), March (1976) and others. My concern has been to know more about the techniques of designers for the following reasons: firstly, to help children think and act by finding out how their ability to design develops; and secondly, to help teachers assess designing activity.

Darke (1979) was writing at a time when a systematic procedure of design was presumed to be an objective analysis-synthesis approach. She conducted interviews with architects in support of a conjecture-analysis approach

to designing. She found that architects formulate a limit very early in the process and set limited objectives. These objectives are a starting point for the architect and a way into the design. This observation was based on the way the architects in her study took some features of the site they were developing as a 'primary generating' factor in the design. She believes that designers have to do this in order to find a way of reducing the various possible solutions.

In the G/T lesson on patterns reported above, one of the boys noticed that "a pattern goes straight and diagonal." He was making a statement that could become his 'primary generator.' He is a divergent thinker, more concerned with the problem than the goal.

> The students must arrange 18 squares of paper in 3 colors into a pattern sequence on a rectangular piece of construction paper. The emphasis is on exploration and the chosen solution must include every shape. B1 says: *"A pattern goes straight and diagonal."* He explores and plays with the squares and makes approximately 20 different ideas. (B1. 6. 1 yrs.)

Lawson (1980) devised controlled experiments which he performed on 5th year architectural students and 5th year science students that involved various construction tasks using colored blocks. One of his interesting results was an analysis of the different problem-solving strategies between the groups. The scientists adopted a procedure which was aimed at uncovering the problem structure. The architects generated a sequence of solution attempts until one proved acceptable. One approach was 'problem focused' (scientists) and the other 'solution focused' (designers).

Different approaches to the problem-solving task can be seen in my research: for example, B1 (see above) shows a divergent approach and is preoccupied with the problem, while B3 takes a more convergent solution approach to the same task. He focuses on finding an acceptable solution and not on exploration.

> B3 finds a solution which is acceptable to him quite rapidly and sticks down his response with glue. (5.9 yrs.)

Akin (1979) attempted to study a more nebulous aspect of designing, 'intuitive design' - the natural behavior of designers compared with systematic design methods and computer aided designing. Akin identified a hierarchy of design strategies, beginning with setting up the design context, followed by searching for sub-solutions. He reports that analysis takes place at all stages but that synthesis occurred quite early in the task. A feature, he reports is the generation of new task goals and redefinition of task constraints. Designers start at any point and move toward the goal by pursuing small improvements. Like Darke, he found that the systematic procedure of analysis - synthesis and evaluation seems inappropriate and did not reflect his experience of design behavior.

In the school context, I found that groups of children working together (for example: B3 and B1 playing with LEGO and K'NEX) in the context of free choice activity were more likely to mirror what Akin termed as 'the natural behavior of designers,' (characterized by the behavior of two boys playing on the beach reported previously). In schools generally a problem-solving, objective, systems approach to practical tasks has been prevalent, which owes more to Simon (1969) and his followers than to what designers say they do.

> B3 starts by collecting three (LEGO) models that he had made previously.
>
> "Let's make a vehicle" he says to another boy. They explore the manipulative box of K'NEX, turning wheels and testing them. B3 says he did not use K'NEX much last year. They choose and connect parts that will turn. B3 adds a part to his friend's model, who in turn says he does not need it. B3 says: "Let's - it's cool."..... B3 is very proud of the structure and can now turn it at its base. He shows the others "how cool it is." His friend has connected his model to his and they explain how it will work: "When the wind catches this one it helps the other to turn. It grinds and helps to make electricity!" (B3. 6.6 yrs.)

Archer (1984) an engineer and academic noted in his studies of designers that they start with a general idea (B3 had a notion of what he wanted to achieve) and work toward a particular problem or need. While designing may be problem focused, designing activity does not necessarily start with a problem or solve a problem. Some design tasks are ill-defined. Designers are called to present the most satisfactory or apposite solution to their client. Designers have to make choices and work with incomplete information. With the children there was little shortage of general ideas, and sometimes they were ill-defined.

An important skill for designers is to be able to look at a situation from a fresh viewpoint. One girl who was working with the G/T teacher to create pattern arrangements with squares of paper remarked: "I'm not using them." She rejected the orange shapes. (G3. 5.8 yrs). This student was generating her own idea. My suspicion (unproved) is that this is difficult for many children; for one

reason it requires taking risks. Jones (1979) points out:

> *"Creativity is not so much having good ideas as being willing to attempt what is unfamiliar and being willing to change one's mind."*

Sometimes it is also necessary to let children at times develop a mind of their own. G3 was matching wooden shapes on a card in a prescribed task. Which one are you doing? " I'm doing my own." Instead of placing the shapes flat she was building them up into a relief pattern. (G3. 5.8 yrs.)

Jones (1979) and Rowe (1987) state that one of the most inventive aspects of designing is redefining the task or the problem. This is an example of novel transfer of knowledge:

> B2 and another boy have been doing a math activity with red and yellow Unifix cubes and egg cartons, in which they were estimating quantities of more and less. When they had finished, they started to play: "Here's a hot dog with less ketchup and more mustard." (5.10 yrs.)

Levin (1966 in Cross, 1990) suggests that a designer through generating and testing solutions can recognize a missing ingredient and can apply the power of conjecture and original thought to the task. This involves a system of ordering.

The teacher can nurture children's embryonic but ill-formed ideas. They can foster in children strategies where they can restate their problem and need through evaluating what they have achieved. Problem evaluating and solving have to be integral to the whole design process. I have made some observations where one teacher has successfully achieved this goal with her grade 1 students. In her class, I was able to see how the peer group played a vital role in the design decision and in the problem and solution defining process. In this instance the problem has been restated and the student encouraged to make a new challenge:

> B1 had made a robot out of K'NEX, he planned to make a drawing of his robot.
>
> He would do this so others could recreate his construction. He counted the parts he has used and he took a different crayon for each color and wrote for example, GRAY 6. Near to completing his plan, he had written the details on a sheet of white paper and it was color coded. (B1. 6.9 yrs.).

Jones (1979) makes an important point:

> *"Designing today is not a simple in-out process of one person. It is a concerted effort of a whole group of people, especially when the thing to be designed is outside the experience of one person."*

Thomas and Carroll (1979) developed a wide range of observation and experimental design studies. During the course of their studies, they modified their view that designing is a form of problem-solving for ill-defined problems to the opinion that designing is essentially a way of looking at a problem.

Assessing Design Activity

The rationale for designing activity in schools is concerned not so much for achieving effective results, but with the development of children's knowledge and understanding. This has implications for assessment.

The assessment of thought processes involved in designing within craft and design subjects in British schools led to the commission of a report: 'Design in General Education' (Archer 1976). Also, in the 1970s, there was an increased awareness for accountability in education. The Assessment of Performance Unit was established to monitor students' performance in the curriculum in 1975. In 1981, the Assessment Performance Unit (APU) were given a brief to consider among other aspects of learning: how design might be assessed. The notion emerged that through design (and technology) a variety of types of knowledge and skills were embedded in the procedural activity itself. I have made use of some of the tools from this discussion document for my observation instrument of young children learning through designing.

This project by the APU and another in 1991 (Kimbell, et al.) contributed to the framework for the design component of the National Curriculum for Technology in England and Wales (1990).

As stated previously, our capacity to respond actively and intentionally to the physical environment, to create purposeful outcomes and possible future states is driven by distinct abilities. In order to observe the development of children's cognitive ability, I devised an observation tool. I identified a number of key designerly thinking skills which were included on the Leaner Profile Observations chart. It shows six groups of abilities: Perceiving, Imaging, Modeling, Questioning, Planning and Organization, and Evaluating. Each set has four observable activities. These observables are based on a framework for identifying design abilities discussed in the APU document (1981, Table I, page 3). Design is essentially about change and future possibility. I therefore incorporated the '4 MAT

System' (McCarthy, 1980) as an additional set of observables.

As it was difficult at times to follow the actions of several children in one classroom, I found an assessment tool by Sunburst to be invaluable in helping the collection and organization of data. The Sunburst instrument is used in conjunction with a hand held Apple Newton to collect the data. This versatile tool allowed me to add additional observables and to annotate notes about the children.

I did not require a qualifier for my study as I was looking for student capacity to design. A qualifier would be needed to gauge student ability.

Design activity requires students to use all the six groups in the Learner Profile in proceeding toward a purposeful goal. There is no hierarchy in the order of the activity. Students need to be given an opportunity to identify needs, generate ideas and goals, plan and make an outcome, and evaluate and test the ideas in the course of the action. Teachers seeking to identify student capability in designing situations could establish criteria based on the behavior of expert designers. Are students capable of ?.....

- generating ideas /setting limited objectives;
- developing solution goal /oriented approaches;
- starting with a general idea and working toward solution;
- working with and resolving ill defined tasks/ tolerating uncertainty/taking risks;
- redefining the task /generating new task goals;
- taking a systematic course of action;
- producing novel, unexpected solutions;
- analyzing at all stages;
- using non verbal, graphic media as a modeling tool and as a means of solving problems.

ΦΦΦΦΦ ΦΦΦΦΦ

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USING NEWSPAPERS AS TEXTBOOKS OF LIFE AND CULTURE

BY ROSS BUTCHART VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOLS

The photograph shows a young man standing curbside on the Stanley Park Causeway - a main artery on the daily commute to and from Vancouver. He is clean-cut, displays an engaging smile to the passing motorists, and looks very dapper in his conservative business suit. He is also holding up a very large home-made sign which reads: URGENTLY REQUIRE JOB TO SUPPORT YOUNG FAMILY. PHONE RICK AT 260-0001

The caption further explains how this young man's department had been eliminated during a corporate restructuring, and how he has spent the previous thirteen months vainly seeking employment. In desperation he could think of no other way to advertise his plight than to make himself a visible attraction to commuter traffic at 7:30 in the morning.

A bizarre story? Perhaps. But it was featured - comprising about one-quarter of the front page - in my daily newspaper one morning this past summer. And it is also typical of the type of article a skillful teacher can use to make learning 'come alive' for gifted students.

For example, she can challenge her students with questions such as: If you were the owner of a small self-operated business and require a new employee to find new markets for your products, would you consider hiring this young man? Why? How would you recognize whether your motives were based on your sympathy, or his merit? Do this young man's actions reflect his desperation or his resourcefulness? Does this matter that much? What further information would you want to know about this young man before you would consider hiring him?

Of course, questions such as these only relate to this specific story. But the ideas and understandings contained within the answers are not limited to this single incident. In fact, many emerge that when formulated into further questions can lead students to look both within and beyond themselves to explore a variety of directions. For example: What is the unemployment rate in your city today? What are its causes? Is this greatly changed from a decade ago? What is the relationship between unemployment and other social malaises such as alcoholism, poverty, domestic violence, and increased crime? Has improved technology contributed to or detracted from making a 'healthier' environment in the workplace? Indeed, has it increased or decreased overall social benefits? What obligations, if any, should a business organization have toward its employees?

More so in recent years than during the early part of my career I have found the daily newspaper to be a valuable resource. As one of the most inclusive textbooks ever written - a true textbook of life - it offers tremendous possibilities for the gifted student. Always topical and available six days a week for nominal cost, its pages contain every motive governing human behaviour, every theme known to world literature, and every personality recognized in human nature. It deals with the serious, the joyful, the tragic, the humorous, the bizarre. It has style, tone, and bias. It is a self-contained library of prose, letters, essays, interviews, journals, photographs, diagrams, graphs, and cartoons. Indeed, it encompasses the passions of psychology to the impact of ideas, the essence of emotion to the subtleties of style. It can be used for great educational benefit.

Studies that students can undertake using the newspaper are virtually unlimited. Activities such as having them place on a world map the names of all cities where feature stories occur over a given period of time (geography), finding an example where each of four different number systems appears (mathematics), writing a letter to the editor (composition), and reassembling four cut-up *Peanuts* cartoons (sequencing) are examples not without their challenges. They are also somewhat common. So what I propose instead is to suggest several theme areas more appropriate as enrichment pursuits for gifted students and to offer some guided questions and directed activities that I believe are more relevant and demanding.

WHAT IS NEWS?

• Follow (cut out, record) the three daily feature stories in your newspaper over a one month period of time.
- Create your own classification system and categorize each story. - What category received the most 'newsworthy' stories? Why do you think this category of news is the most reported? - What story remained the feature item for the most extended period of time? For how long did it remain a front page feature? Why, in your opinion, was it the most popular?

• In your opinion, do stories that appeal to the bizarre and the sensational (e.g., the O.J. Simpson trial) deserve extended media coverage? Why?/Why not?

• If you were responsible for selecting the "News Story of the Month," what criteria would you apply to your selection? - Make a list of your five priorities. Why did you select these – justify your choices.

• If you were appointed the new editor-in-chief of your newspaper, what major change(s) would you make that, in your opinion, would improve it significantly? - Write to your newspaper and suggest they adopt this change(s) (However, don't be too surprised by their reaction).

SELL THAT PRODUCT!

• Select six major advertisements that appear in your newspaper on any given day. - Who is the target consumer for the product featured in each advertisement? - What technique(s) of persuasion dominate each advertisement? - How much space does each advertisement take up? What is the daily cost of each advertisement for the product's supplier? - Track one of these advertisements over time. How long did the advertising campaign for this product run? - Study the effects of advertising on the general public. How long should it take for the supplier to recoup the cost incurred through his advertising campaign?

• Select advertisements that target two consumer groups: (a) senior citizens, and (b) teenagers. - What consumer group is targeted most frequently? Which of these has the most disposable income? Is there an apparent contradiction in your findings? - What types of consumer items are targeted for each group? - How do the techniques of persuasion used in the advertisements differ for each consumer group?

• Design a newspaper advertisement for a new ice-cream product that would appeal to both consumer groups.

HUMAN INTEREST EXTRAORDINARY!

• The newspaper article explained how Mr. Xu, a 58-year-old farmer from a rural village in northern China, has eaten a live snake daily for the past 30 years. The western reporter who actually witnessed and was overwhelmed by its happening, wrote how he arrived just in time "to see the wiggling tail disappear into Mr. Xu's mouth." Furthermore, the article continues, Mr. Xu gives every appearance of being an extremely healthy man and feels his day would be lacking without his regular intake of live snake. - Pretend that you are a reporter assigned by a major wire service to conduct a live interview with Mr. Xu. List the first five questions that you would ask him. - With a classmate, roll play a fictitious three minute interview between yourself and Mr. Xu.

• The article reported how a businessman who accidentally locked himself out of his hotel room in southwestern England while he was nude used an American Express application form to cover up. Grabbing the leaflet from the hotel lobby, the embarrassed man ran to a nearby pay telephone to dial the police. They arrived to find him still clutching the "strategically placed" application. A spokes-

man for American Express was quick on the uptake. "We cover all eventualities," he said. - We have all known or experienced embarrassing incidents. Write a short newspaper article relating an embarrassing moment you experienced or which happened to another person.

• The article reported how a taxi driver in Indonesia has gone to considerable extremes, including driving through the midst of a violent protest in downtown streets, to return the wallet (which contained a sizeable amount of money) to a client who had inadvertently left it in his car. Naturally the client was overjoyed at the taxi driver's honesty and gave him a small cash reward in appreciation.

What makes this story intriguing, however, is how the taxi driver was excoriated by his wife for his honesty when he arrived home and told her his story. In no uncertain terms he was told how stupid he was to return money that was rightfully his, given the stupidity of his client for misplacing it : Comment on the attitude and behaviour of both the taxi driver and his wife.

FOLLOW THAT FEATURE!

Incredibly, each school year some story always seems to emerge as a recurring issue. Recently, such matters as bizarre weather patterns and their consequences, unprovoked attacks by pit bull terriers, and overreaction by people to minor incidents (I well remember the story where a shopper in a grocery store pursued another customer - hurling invectives, and finally a can of stewed tomatoes at him - all because of an accidental brushing of their shopping carts in the aisle) have dominated newspapers in many parts of the world, and for an extended length of time.

As a long-term project, students can document such incidents, in some cases speculate as to the reason(s) for their sudden emergence, and even consider the following: - Does 'news' tend to perpetuate itself?

FEATURES COMPARED

At the time of this writing, two newspapers I receive have initiated a special three part series to investigate an area of specific concern to each. In a series titled, "Warning: Pilot Error," *USA Today* is focusing on the failure of regional airlines to train their pilots adequately and the potential for disaster this holds. Similarly, my local newspaper, *The Vancouver Sun*, is featuring a series titled "Gambling Halls" in which they outline recent reforms to public education mandated by the provincial government and analyze the pros and cons of some possible consequences.

Comparing the format, style, and bias of such feature items holds tremendous potential as a project for gifted students. Once they have accumulated a number of special-feature series they can be challenged through directions such as: What is the bias or "slant" taken by the newspaper with respect to the subject featured? How does the title of the series reflect this bias? Who were interviewed for the writing of this series? What positions of significance do they hold (political official, union leader, client of the service, etc.)? What do they have to gain or lose by supporting or rejecting this bias? Document the incidence of factual statements that can be supported by concrete evidence. Contrast these with documented opinions - comments that cannot be substantiated by hard evidence. Which of the two - fact or opinion - dominate the series? How does the use of photographs and/or cartoons contribute to the effectiveness of the series? Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the series. Did it fulfill its intent in a convincing and engaging fashion? Why?/Why not? Of all the feature-series you accumulated, which was the most effective and convincing? Why - what made it so?

PERSONAL TIME LINE

Most newspapers maintain an excellent archive which, through the wonders of microfilm, is readily available to the public. What better way then to teach the continuity of history than to have students document historical, as well as other events in conjunction with their most personal interest -- themselves!

Challenge students to produce a personal time line, highlighting first their day of birth, followed by each subsequent fourth birthday. Each fourth-year account should answer questions such as: What was the headline story? What was the weather forecast? What was the most popular movie showing in the theatres? What musical group and/or song title was the most popular? How many deaths were reported? How many births? What was the price of a new car? A pair of jeans? A carton of milk? etc. By how much had this increased in four years? What was the major sports story? What was the topic of the lead editorial comment?

Once their time line of specific dates is complete, students can pursue more general concepts: Did the headline story on any one of your birthdays have any long-term historical significance? Explain. Did a story of 'secondary' importance have more significance in the long run? (While renovating my house a few years back, I discovered the front page of the daily newspaper published the day the workmen enclosed the walls and stuck it between the studs. The feature story was about Maurice Chevalier's role in a new movie. Ironically, another front page article of

secondary significance gave a short account of the burning of the Reichstag in Berlin). Can you predict what the price of a carton of milk will be on your next birthday?

CONCLUSION

The newspaper can be more than just a daily read of the news events of our world and your community. I believe in the hands of a skilled teacher it has the potential to become the foundation of a complete curriculum. Cheap, topical, ever-changing – its content not only permits the integration of many discrete subject areas, it also holds an appeal that, if judiciously used, can stimulate the interest, challenge the intellect, and enrich the experiences of gifted students of all ages and backgrounds. ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

APPRECIATION FOR A GIFTED AMERICAN WRITER: ELLEN GLASGOW (1874-1945) BY MICHAEL E. WALTERS

"I would write, I resolve, as no Southerner had ever written, of the universal chords beneath the superficial variations of scene and character. I would write of all the harsher realities beneath matters, beneath social customs, beneath the poetry of the past, and romantic nostalgia of the present." From The Woman Within (1954) by Ellen Glasgow.

From 1929 until the 1950s, there developed in the southern part of the United States a movement known as the Southern Renaissance. It was in response to the conflict of social values that occurred after the Civil War. Some of the world famous members of this literary awakening were William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Eudora Welty, Robert Penn Warren and Ellen Glasgow. Although Glasgow was writing prior to 1929, her most significant novels were published after that period. Simultaneously, she also represents the upsurge of women authors who produced world famous American literature. These were besides herself, Willa Cather and Edith Wharton. The fact that Glasgow was a feminist is very important because her novels, while concerned with the impact of clinging to values of the Confederacy, also probe the rituals women were forced to perform in a value system known as Southern gentility. It is interesting to note that at the same time the nation was being enthralled by Margaret Mitchell's Scarlett O'Hara, there was another woman writer (Glasgow) analyzing the social values of the same culture. For Glasgow, Scarlett O'Hara represented the behavior pattern she described as "evasive idealism." The Southern Belle, the Southern Lady and the Southern Gentleman were archetypes that upheld the social values of the old South.

Glasgow grew up and lived most of her life in Richmond, Virginia where she enjoyed a period of being indulged as a Southern Belle. However, she was also committed to the values of being a writer and a person of literature. Therefore, she perceived her role as honestly portraying the false idealism and social repression behind Southern values near the turn of the century.

It is Ms. Glasgow's artistry that is so noteworthy for the modern reader. She was able to make the reader get inside her characters and understand the social processes that created Southern archetypes. In The Sheltered Life (1932), she analyzed the psychic imprisonment of a beautiful Southern Belle: "Even in Queensborough, which contained as much laughter as any place of its size in the world, a celebrated belle and beauty could scarcely be expected to laugh by herself. Mirth required company, as Jenny Blair had learned long ago. . . ." The theme of this novel is that the values of the old South were based on the idea of "appearances being reality." Clearly, reality is a combination of many things such as one's perceptions, expectations and internal values. Women, despite being put on a pedestal, were objects of exploitation and forced to live their lives within very defined roles.

Gifted females will appreciate the literary struggles of Ellen Glasgow. Besides her novels, she wrote two non-fiction books that are full of insight concerning the literary development of a gifted female writer. One is a collection of prefaces to her novels, A Certain Measure (1943), which described how she composed them. The other is The Woman Within-- her intellectual memoir published posthumously in 1954. In this book, she described the struggles she had to undergo to maintain her identity as an individual. Alfred Kazin, the dean of contemporary American literary criticism, compared her to Chekhov. In the same fashion as this great Russian writer, she described the agony of living in a world of enormous social change. Ellen Glasgow needs to be rediscovered and appreciated as a great female writer in American literature.

Ellen Glasgow's Books

Fiction – (1) Virginia. 1913; (2) Barren Ground. 1925; (3) The Sheltered Life. 1932; (4) Vein of Iron. 1935; (5) In This Our Life. 1941. (She won a Pulitzer Prize for this novel.); (6) The Collected Stories. 1963.
Non-Fiction -- (1) A Certain Measure. 1943; (2) The Woman Within. 1954; (3) Letters. 1958.